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and other articles

and Reviews by

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VOLUME XXXI

DECEMBER 1940

NUMBER 4

ARTICLES

- The Judge and the Lawyer in the *Pathelin* H. G. HARVEY 313
- Défense du confident JACQUES ALBERT FERMAUD 334
- Twelve New Letters of Voltaire to Gabriel Cramer GEORGE R. HAVENS 341
- Chateaubriand, Revitalizer of the French Classics CARLOS LYNES, JR. 355
- A Parnassian La Rochefoucauld: Madame de La Roche-Guyon
AARON SCHAFFER 364
- Source et emploi d'un épisode dans *A la recherche du temps perdu*
GERMAINE BRÉE 372
- French -ier from Latin -arius MARIO A. PEI 380

REVIEWS

- Les Membres de l'Institut, *Histoire littéraire de la France. Tome XXXVII*. [LOUIS CONS] 394
- Charles Henry Stevens, *Lope de Vega's El palacio confuso, Together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature*; James White Crowell, *Agustín de Rojas' El natural desdichado*. [W. L. FICHTER] 398

Henry Carrington Lancaster, <i>A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. Part IV: The Period of Racine, 1673-1700.</i> [FERNAND BALDENSBERGER]	404
Willard Austin Kinne, <i>Revivals and Importations of French Comedies in England, 1749-1800.</i> [EDMOND MCADOO GAGEY]	408
Paul Hazard, <i>Quatre Etudes.</i> [HENRI PEYRE]	410
Tommaso Fiore, <i>Sainte-Beuve, Studio su Virgilio.</i> [HORATIO SMITH]	412
M. Mespoulet, <i>Images et romans: Parenté des estampes et du roman réaliste de 1815 à 1865.</i> [MEYER SCHAPIRO]	414
Yvonne Martinet, <i>Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), sa vie et son œuvre; Yvonne Martinet, Numa Roumestan par A. Daudet: La Pièce et le roman.</i> [A. R. FAVREAU]	416
A. Ernout and T. A. Meillet, <i>Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine: Histoire des mots.</i> [HENRI F. MULLER]	418
Books Received	422
INDEX OF VOLUME XXXI	423

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THE JUDGE AND THE LAWYER IN THE *PATHELIN*

WHAT COURT of law is represented in the trial scene in the *Farce de Maître Pierre Pathelin*? What is the professional status of the lawyer, and of the judge, who appear in it? What is the attitude of the author towards them?

These are questions that must be settled before any valuable estimate can be made of the significance of the play as a picture of the administration of justice in France in the fifteenth century, before any but the most superficial statement can be made about the intentions of the author concerning the members of the legal profession who appear in it. If the trial scene represents a superior court of justice, particularly if it represents a royal court of justice, even a royal court of the lowest order, but controlled by officers of the King and ministered to by royal judges and by licensed advocates, members of a chartered law society, then satire of the advocate and the judge in the play may be an important satire of the administration of justice. But if the court is a seigniorial or ecclesiastical tribunal of the lowest order, a court staffed by the humble deputies of the seignior or of the bishop, a court in which unlicensed practitioners appear as advocates, then satire of such a court, or of its officers or professional frequenters, is satire of a very restricted area of the administration of justice, unless the author clearly indicates that he intends the court to represent courts of law in general. The attitude of the author towards his characters, his intentions and his point of view, are important as revealing the weight and bearing of his satire.

I believe that the author of the *Farce de Maître Pierre Pathelin* was at some pains to make all this quite clear to his fifteenth-century audience. But what was clear to that audience is by no means clear to present-day specialists in fifteenth-century theatre. A searching study of contemporary customs in respect to litigation, a study of the requirements of professional organizations and of the intricate involvements of court jurisdictions, is a necessary prelude to a critical analysis of some of the social aspects of the play. It seems that none of the many commentators on the play have made such a study. For the most part, they content themselves with stating that "the lawyers" or "les gens de justice" are satirized in it. Even Richard Holbrook and

Louis Cons, who have contributed so much to the study of *Pathelin*, do not appear to have investigated this aspect of the play.

It is true that the creator of *Pathelin* was a great artist, that the trial scene in this play, unlike some trial scenes in the theatre of the time, is not just an amateurish copy of actual court room procedure. Such court room scenes can usually be identified without difficulty, with less difficulty than the one in which *Pathelin* appears. Nevertheless, the trial scene in the *Farce de Maistre Pierre Pathelin* is just as realistic as that in, say, Coquillart's *Plaidoyé de la simple et de la rusée*. It merely happens to be a different kind of court of law that is represented.

The identification of this court of law is bound up with the investigation of the status of its law officers. It would be impossible, or at least inconvenient, to discuss these questions separately. The whole problem revolves around the question of jurisdiction, the question of professional customs, and, to a lesser degree, the question of the *locus*.

Everything in the circumstances of the suit, and in the description of the judge, of the lawyer, of the trial itself, indicates that the court of justice we see is a tribunal of the lowest order. Our first impression is that it is a village court, and that *Pathelin* is a village lawyer. The whole tone of the opening conversation between the lawyer and his wife supports this impression. *Pathelin* cannot understand why he is losing his clients. Is he not the most learned man in the district, with the exception of the mayor?

PATHELIN

*Encor ne le dis je pas pour me
vanter, mais n'a, au territoire
ou nous tenons nostre auditoire,
homme plus saige, fors le maire.*

GUILLEMETTE

*Aussy a il leu le grimaire
et aprins a clerc longue piece.*

PATHELIN

*A qui vez vous que ne despesche
sa cause, se je m'y vueil mettre?
et si n'aprins oncques a lettre
qu'ung peu; mais je m'ose vanter
que je say aussi bien chanter
ou livre avecques nostre prestre
que se j'eusses esté a maistre
autant que Charles en Espagne.¹*

1. *Maistre Pierre Pathelin*, edited by Richard T. Holbrook, Paris, 1924, ll. 14-27.

A few lines farther on, Guillemette remarks:

..... sans clergise
et sans sens naturel, vous estes
tenu l'une des chaudes testes
qui soit en toute la parroisse.

The references to the "territoire ou nous tenons nostre auditoire," to "le maire," to "nostre prestre" and to "la parroisse" suggest that the setting is a village, or a very small town. But what is far more significant is that Pathelin's lack of education raises the strongest presumption that he is nothing more than an unlicensed village practitioner.

The members of the French law societies early gained a most favorable reputation for their learning and integrity, a reputation which has been remarkably well maintained in every period of French history down to our day. As early as the year 1274, the *Confrérie des Avocats au Parlement de Paris* required its members to subscribe to a stringent ethical code, sworn to yearly in a solemn ceremony. Soon, a university degree was generally required for inscription on the roll.² In the course of the fifteenth century, high academic standards and an ever-lengthening period of apprenticeship further increased their reputation for learning and skill.³ As the provincial *Parlements* were formed, similar companies of advocates arose about them, and the lawyers connected with the bailiffs' courts followed suit. In the time of Pathelin, the licensed advocates lived in the principal towns, those connected with a bailiwick following the bailiff in his round of assizes, which were held in the smaller towns. Only licensed advocates could plead in such courts, or in any high court of justice.⁴ But unlicensed practitioners, barred from the law societies by their lack of qualifications, flourished in the corrupt village courts, where they substituted guile and quickness of wit

2. The yearly oath is first mentioned in an Ordonnance of the year 1274. Capacity for inscription on the role was attested by production of a license in canon or civil law. This rule is first found stated in formal terms in an Ordonnance published in 1535, but the wording of the Ordonnance indicates that this formal declaration was intended merely as a consecration of what had been the immemorial custom of the order. Pasquier, Loisel, Dufour de Pibrac and many other distinguished scholars of the sixteenth century unite in praising the learning and integrity of the advocates of Paris, many of whom contributed to the humanistic studies of the day.

3. Preparation for admission to the Bar in the fifteenth century regularly included an elementary education in the schools and colleges of Paris (or some other large city), followed by two years in a law school (at Orléans, Bourges or Poitiers, if the degree in civil law was desired), and a period of apprenticeship (*le stage*) as clerk to a licensed advocate. It was at this stage that the future advocate was connected with the Basoche. The length of the *stage* was not fixed definitely until the seventeenth century. In 1519, it was for four years; later, for ten years. Even after being admitted, the junior advocate could not immediately plead in court, but must spend some time on the bench of the *audientes*.

4. This was the rule as early as the year 1340.

for the law school training and ethical code of the bona fide barrister. These village pettifoggers had no right to call themselves *avocats*; properly speaking, they were merely *praticiens*. But they often usurped the nobler title.

Pathelin and his wife know perfectly well that he has not the qualifications necessary for obtaining a license. This, indeed, is a sore point with Pathelin. He is full of excuses for his lack of learning, while trying to make it seem as great as possible. When he says that, next to the mayor, he is the most learned man in the district, one has only to remember the conceit and ignorance of Thevot (in the farce called *Thevot le Maire*) to measure the learning of lawyer Pathelin. And can the "territoire" he speaks of be any more than a village district if Pathelin is more learned than any of his *confrères*? In fact, the more Pathelin tries to cover up his weak point, the more obvious it becomes (which was the author's intention, of course), and the more obvious that he is just a village lawyer. He can read Latin as well as the parish priest, he says. Again we are reminded of Thevot. Village priests were often ignorant, and Pathelin is bragging. It is noteworthy that while he is casting about for something with which to bolster up his ego, he never mentions that he went to law school, or that he had been apprenticed to an advocate.⁵

Pathelin is on surer ground when he begins to boast of his skill in pleading. Here he feels that he is the equal of anyone, and a good deal more effective than those who wear the robes of silk and wool, and call themselves advocates . . . than those "qui dient qu'i sont advocas." At this point, his conversation with his wife reveals clearly the author's intention to distinguish between Pathelin and the regular members of the Bar:

PATHELIN

*S'il escouvient que je m'aplique
a bouter avant ma pratique,
on ne sçaura trouver mon per.*

GUILLEMETTE

*Par Saint Jaques, non! de tromper
vous en estes ung fin droit maistre.*

5. Pathelin's account of his education would have elicited many a laugh from an audience such as the Basochiens played to in the Palais de Justice. When his wife says proudly (but with a certain amount of awe) that he has read "le grimaire," a city audience would understand (a) that Pathelin and his wife are ignorant, and (b) that she thinks that his ability to change black into white has been developed by the study of magic.

PATHELIN

*Par celluy Dieu qui me fist naistre,
mais de droitte advocasserie!*

GUILLEMETTE

*Par ma foy, mais de tromperie!
Combien vrayment je m'en advise,
quant, a vray dire, sans clergise
et sans sens naturel, vous estes
tenu l'une des chaudes testes
qui soit en toute la parroisse.*

PATHELIN

*Il n'y a nul qui se congnoisse
si hault en advocacion.*

GUILLEMETTE

*M'aist Dieu! mais en trompacion!
au mains en avez vous le los.*

PATHELIN

*Si ont ceulx qui de camelos
sont vestus et de camocas,
qui dient qu'il sont advocas,
mais pourtant ne le sont ilz mye.⁶*

The dispute between the two turns on the question of the proper application of the terms *advocasserie* and *advocacion*. In the fifteenth century, both terms meant the exercise of the profession of advocate. Come now, says Guillemette, you know you haven't the learning to be an advocate. What you call pleading is nothing but trickery! You don't know how to plead like an advocate. Pathelin, loath to admit that he has not the right to apply the nobler title to his *pratique*, lashes out peevishly against the legitimate wearers of the robe. His jealousy of "those who call themselves advocates" shows clearly that he does not think of himself as one of them, and that he resents their pretensions. The elaborately robed barristers who follow the *bailli* in his round, dignified and learned members of the Bar who look down their noses at such as he, may call themselves advocates, says Pathelin, but when it comes to bringing tears to the eyes of a stony-hearted judge I

6. Ll. 41-61. The rich dress of the members of the Law Societies excited the envy and indignation of a good many satirical moralists in the fifteenth century. In the *Moralité de Charité*, we find a scathing reference to "avocats qui sont fourrez comme prelatz." The preachers Menot and Maillard were especially virulent in their abuse of judges and lawyers for their love of rich dress. "Vous dites que vostre estat porte cela? A tous les diables et vostre estat et vous aussi!" roars Maillard. Apparently the fine wool cloth called *camelos* was a favorite for lawyer's robes, for Rabelais calls a certain lawyer "seigneur de Camelotière" (Book v., Prologue).

am their superior, and my reputation for honesty is as good as theirs, anyway.

Pathelin is painfully aware of the social gap between the licensed advocates and himself. In the play, he is usually addressed and referred to as *maistre*, a vague term. When the word *avocat* is applied to him, it is always accompanied by some qualifying word. The draper calls him "cest advocat d'eaue douce" (l. 756), that is, a freshwater lawyer, one not trained and not licensed to sail the vast ocean of jurisprudence. The draper also calls him an "avocat potatif" (l. 770), a curious expression which most likely means that he does not think of Pathelin as a real advocate.⁷

I think that it is safe to assume that Pathelin represents nothing but a village practitioner. Is the court in which he appears a village court? Before answering that question, I must first ask another: what is draper Joceaulme's cause of action, and what court was likely to accept jurisdiction over it? The draper's shepherd, Aignelet, has killed several of his master's sheep and converted them to his own use. Joceaulme could have laid a criminal charge, and had the shepherd arrested, but he probably thinks that he will gain more by suing for damages.⁸ At any rate, that is what he does. He has a writ issued and notice to appear before the judge is served on Aignelet (l. 1028). To what court did Joceaulme apply for the writ?

Naturally, he would have to go to a court that would accept a petty claim for damages, and would hear the case as court of first instance. In France today, he could go to a justice of the peace if the amount involved were very small; otherwise, to the local district court. But in France in the fifteenth century a bewildering variety of tribunals competed with one another for the profitable business of litigation. This was particularly so in the lowest order of jurisdictions. Seigniorial

7. See Richard Holbrook, *Etude sur Pathelin*, Baltimore, 1917, pp. 61-62. The word *potatif* is not given in glossaries of fifteenth and sixteenth-century French. Holbrook says that he was unable to find another example of it. Apparently it was coined by the author. F. Génin, in his edition of the play (1854), reads *potatif* as *portatif*, pointing to the numerous examples of the fall of the consonant *r* in the texts of the time. He comments: "*avocat portatif*, comme l'on disait *évêque portatif*, c'est ce que nous disons aujourd'hui *évêque in partibus* . . . c'est-à-dire, évêque sans évêché. Ainsi, par analogie, l'avocat portatif était avocat sans cause, avocat *in partibus*."

But, if *évêque portatif* meant a bishop without a bishopric, would not *avocat portatif* mean, by an even closer analogy, an advocate without a court, i.e. one whose name was not inscribed on the role of the advocates attached to the local law society, not a licensed advocate?

Holbrook would like to retain the original reading (that found in the earliest texts), and have *potatif* come from *potare*, with the meaning *ivrogne*. But he admits that the term may have suggested *putatif*, too. *Avocat putatif* is an expression that fits Pathelin exactly.

8. Aignelet seems to have enough money to make suing him worth while. See l. 1116.

courts *de basse justice* existed in every village, municipal courts in most towns. The church sent its *officiales* into every corner of every bishopric, while the royal provosts and bailiffs disputed jurisdiction with church and seignior. Each of these judicial organizations claimed territorial jurisdiction, and, in addition, the church courts claimed exclusive authority, on moral and spiritual grounds, over a wide variety of matters, particularly those in which promises made under oath were involved, or where one of the parties was a clerk or a poor or weak member of society, while the royal courts claimed the right to hear appeals from all other courts, and, during the fifteenth century, were actively maintaining the right to hear in first instance many kinds of lawsuits formerly heard in the church courts, notably criminal cases, or those involving disputed rights in respect to real property.

Now, it is quite certain that our draper did not go to a royal court. The humble itinerant judge in the play, who sits on Saturday at six o'clock,⁹ and has a later sitting that day (l. 1227), who hears *viva voce* a petty claim for damages, who proceeds without formality, without advocates, without *prud'hommes* or *assesseurs*, who has only one case on the docket and (apparently) only one lawyer present, is no royal provost or bailiff, any more than Pathelin is royal advocate. And it is not likely that the ill-clad constable, who proudly carries, as the symbol of his office, a whip from which the lash has been removed, represents a royal *sergent à verge*.¹⁰ If the draper had laid a criminal charge, the royal provost might have been expected to appear. But civil suits like the draper's were seldom or never heard in first instance by royal provosts.

9. Apparently, at six o'clock in the afternoon . . . the shepherd speaks of his *journée a de relevee* (ll. 1074-1075). This was an unusual hour for a court sitting, especially since the judge says that he has another sitting later that day (l. 1227). In the fifteenth century, the law courts of Paris sat at six o'clock in the morning in summer, at seven o'clock in winter. About the time this play was written, the Parlement began sitting on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from four to six. At six o'clock in the evening, the hour when our shepherd says he is to appear before the judge, the law clerks (Basochiens) took possession of the Grande Salle of the Palais de Justice in Paris, and it was at that hour that they held their entertainments, except on special occasions.

Does the author intend to make a connection between the trial scene in his farce, and the mock trials of the Basoche? The time . . . six o'clock on Saturday night . . . may have a special comic meaning for the spectators. Later in the play, he has the judge call the trial *une droicte cornardie* (l. 1487), i.e. an entertainment by Cornards (Basochiens of Rouen). Does the judge mean this to be taken figuratively or literally?

10. See ll. 1022-1024. The *sergents à verge* were first established at the Châtelet in Paris, but their costume, including the wand, was soon imitated by rural constables. The word *deroité*, applied to the costume of this constable, may indicate that he was wearing a second-hand costume which did not fit. This remark by Aignelet would have a special comic value for a Basoche audience as satire of a rural constable, especially if the constable appeared on the stage later, in the trial scene, as the author may have intended.

The court of law represented in the play is probably a village tribunal. At any rate, it is beneath the lowest level of royal justice in the fifteenth century, and corresponds in rank to that of a present-day justice of the peace. Is it a seigniorial court or an ecclesiastical court? This is tantamount to asking whether the judge derives his authority from the seignior of the place, and is either the mayor of the town, or, as would be the case in a larger seignior, an itinerant magistrate who makes the rounds of the chief places in the territory; or whether the judge is an *official forain*, a traveling deputy of the bishop, charged with dispensing ecclesiastical justice in the various parishes of the bishopric.¹¹

The question of jurisdiction is especially interesting at this point. In the fifteenth century, a court of law might claim (accept) jurisdiction on a territorial basis, or it might claim authority over the particular matter of the suit, without regard for the ownership of the land where the cause of action arose. Finally, it might claim jurisdiction over one or both of the parties to the suit. In the case of Joceaulme *versus* Aignelet we are not given definite information on which to base a claim for territorial jurisdiction. From this point of view, the possibility that the court is seigniorial is exactly equal to the possibility that it is ecclesiastical. But when the question of jurisdiction is examined with reference to the matter of the suit, and in connection with the parties to it, it becomes evident that only a church court could find special grounds for accepting the case. The basis of the suit is a breach of trust. The draper entrusted his sheep to the shepherd, either, as was the usual custom, under a hiring agreement, or, less formally, on a basis of mutual understanding.¹² Now this was precisely the sort of agreement that the church courts had always claimed jurisdiction over, and, at the end of the fifteenth century, in spite of inroads made by the

11. From the thirteenth century on, many *officiels forains* were created by the bishops and archdeacons. They were often ambulatory, going from parish to parish, judging minor claims. Such judges were often simple *clerics*, removable *ad nutum*. They were especially numerous in the region of Paris, and to the north and west of Paris.

The fact that the judge in the play is not called an *official* means nothing. In the farce *La Mère, la fille, le tesson, l'amoureux et l'official* (in *Recueil de farces, moralités et sermons joyeux*, ed. by Le Roux de Lincy and Francisque Michel, Paris, 1837, Vol. 1, No. 22), the judge is referred to as an *official* only in the title; in the play, he is called simply *le juge*. Ecclesiastical judges are probably represented in the *Farce du pect* (*Ancien Théâtre Français*, Vol. 1) and in *Jehan de Lagny, badin* (*Recueil cit.*, Vol. II, No. 31), although not so designated.

12. Shepherds were usually hired on a yearly basis, and the hiring contracts were often sworn to before a notary, sometimes in the presence of the seigniorial *bailli*, at the time of the yearly fair. This custom was still in vogue in the eighteenth century, as represented in Planquette's *Les Cloches de Corneville*.

royal courts upon the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over trusts involving real property, the church still exercised full jurisdiction over breaches of trust in respect to personalty. The draper's sheep are personalty. In any case, the church has yielded no ground to the seigniorial courts in such matters. Litigants liked to bring such actions into the church courts for a variety of reasons, some good and some abusive.¹³

The question of jurisdiction was naturally uppermost in the minds of the judge, the draper and Pathelin at the beginning of the trial. When the draper begins, not by producing a hiring agreement, but by telling the court how he had received Aignelet as a poor orphan and brought him up as his own son, the judge immediately interrupts him to ask: "Or escoutons: estoit il point vostre aloué?" (l. 1250). Pathelin, quick to take advantage of a technicality, breaks in with: "Voire, car, s'il estoit joué a le tenir sans alouer . . ." (ll. 1251-1252). If there was no hiring agreement, if Aignelet was not the draper's hired man, the judge may refuse jurisdiction, and, since this judge is in a hurry to get on to his next hearing, he may be persuaded easily to refuse the case on a technicality. This is what Pathelin hopes for, but the point is lost and never raised again because the draper immediately recognizes Pathelin, and the confusion of the cloth and the sheep begins. But it seems likely that the judge, if he is an ecclesiastical judge, would accept jurisdiction irrespective of the matter of the suit, since Aignelet appears to be one of those *miserabiles personae* to whom the church always extended its protection.¹⁴ It is even possible that this is why the draper began as he did, stressing the social status of Aignelet. He evidently cannot produce a formal hiring agreement (it would be quite in his character to have refused one to his foster son), and he intends to establish jurisdiction over the person of the defendant.¹⁵

An *official forain* would have jurisdiction over the person and over the matter of this suit. There is even at least an excellent probability

13. Late in the sixteenth century, the church courts retained an extensive jurisdiction in some places. In Cambrai, by immemorial possession, the official claimed and exercised jurisdiction over all personal actions between bourgeois. Members of the laity in many parts of France, especially merchants (who ran the risk of numerous lawsuits), had the habit of making their contracts before an *official*, with a clause providing for all claims to be settled in the ecclesiastical court. This grew into a serious abuse, but the bishops were reluctant to give up their profitable legal business, and persisted in it in spite of papal injunctions.

14. The judge in the play does in fact assume full and exclusive jurisdiction over the person of the shepherd (ll. 1490-1492).

15. The draper seems quite familiar with court room procedure. Aside from his confusion of sheep and cloth, he conducts his argument much as an advocate might have done.

that he has territorial jurisdiction as well. When the draper first speaks of his suit against Aignelet, he says:

*Mesement les bergiers des champs
me cabusent. Orles le mien,
a qui j'ay tousjours fait du bien,
il ne m'a pas pour bien gabbé:
il en viendra au pié l'abbé,
par la benoïste couronnée!*

(ll. 1011-1016)

The expression *au pié l'abbé* is an unusual one, and may have a special significance here.¹⁶ I suppose it could mean, in a general sense, simply to bring to confession, but there is no reason to suppose that it did not have a more specific meaning. Throughout this scene, the draper has in mind bringing Aignelet before the judge. *Au pié l'abbé* could quite literally mean to the feet of the judge, an ecclesiastical judge. Let us suppose (and what is more likely?) that the draper rented grazing rights from some land-poor abbot. He naturally brings his suit into the court of the *official*, since the action he complains of took place on church land. The seignior would then be the church itself, and the *official* has territorial jurisdiction as well as jurisdiction over the matter and over the person. In fact, the abbot himself may be the bishop's deputy, the *official*, although this seems unlikely.¹⁷

Entirely aside from the jurisdictional aspect of the case, which points directly towards an ecclesiastical tribunal, there is much in what we see of the customs of the court, and in various expressions used by the lawyer and judge, or applied to them, to support the idea that the court is a church court, and that both lawyer and judge represent clerics. The fact that the judge hears and questions the parties directly, without advocates (at first), is in line with the procedure in the *officialités*, and when he accepts Pathelin as advocate for the poor orphan Aignelet, Pathelin who is not a licensed advocate but only a *praticien*, again we are led to think of the church courts where

16. In the glossary appended to his edition, under *abbé*, Holbrook says (without further explanation): "en venir au pié l'abbé 1015 (fig.) faire sa coulpe aux genoux de l'abbé, se repentir." Neither Godefroi nor Huguet give the expression, and it is not given in modern French dictionaries.

17. If Professor Cons is right, and the farce is connected with the abbey of Lyre (see Louis Cons, *L'Auteur de la farce de Pathelin*, Princeton, 1926, *passim*), the judge would be a deputy of the bishop of Evreux. If, on the other hand, the place is Ivernaux, as Holbrook suggests (*Etude*, p. 92), the bishop of Paris had jurisdiction. The *sots* connected with the Basoche of Rouen were known as *cornards*. The repeated use of the words *cornard* (ll. 1170, 1294) and *cornardie* (ll. 448, 1487, 1527) may point to a connection between the author and the Basoche at Rouen. There are several indications that the author wishes his audience to think of the trial scene as a *cornardie*, i.e. as a mock trial such as the Basochiens often put on, both for pleasure and for practice.

ordinary solicitors (*procureurs*) often took the place of advocates.¹⁸ The fact that the draper addresses the judge as *monseigneur* is worth mentioning in view of the possibility that the draper's seignior may be the church. *Monseigneur* suggests a bishop's deputy. *Monsieur le juge*, or *sire*, were the ordinary salutations given the judge in village courts, when it was not *monsieur le maire*.

In the characterization of Pathelin there are a number of bits of evidence that seem to identify him with what was called *un avocat à simple tonsure*. He has the remarkable peculiarity, unique amongst lawyer characters in the medieval comic theatre, of being unable to say ten words without calling on God and a great variety of Saints, particularly *Nostre Dame*, to witness the truth of his words.¹⁹ Is it too far-fetched to see in this a satirical reference to a certain kind of clerical lawyer who, like Our Lady in the *Advocacie Nostre Dame*, and in the various *Procès de Paradis*, relies on tears and eloquent pleading rather than on reason and the law?²⁰ Pathelin is called a fresh-water lawyer (l. 756). Perhaps the emphasis placed on his lack of learning may be intended to give the impression that he practices in church courts.²¹ Pathelin is described as an "avocat à trois leçons et à trois psëaulmes" (ll. 770-771). We are told that he sings from the book as well as the priest (ll. 24-25). Does this not sound as if he were in the habit of doing so? Is he a *lecteur* by profession, and only an

18. As in the *Farce du pect*, and in *Jehan de Lagny, badin*. In the latter play, the defendant, Jehan de Lagny, objects to Messire Jehan acting as advocate . . . "Comment, il est sergent & prestre, Et procureur & aduocat?" The fact that an ordinary solicitor could act as barrister in the church courts was galling to the Basochiens, and they did not fail to comment on it in their farces.

19. He invokes Saint Mary twelve times, various other saints fifteen times, God (or Our Lord) scores of times. The draper's record, however, is nearly as good . . . nine Virgins and ten Saints. Guillemette invokes the Virgin six times, the Saints twice, while the shepherd swears *par Sainte Marie* only twice, by the Saints three times. The judge contains himself very well, exploding only once, with a resounding *par le sang Nostre Dame!*

20. Professor Cons says that the *Advocacie Nostre-Dame* was the "livre de chevet" of Guillaume Alecis, supposed author of the play (Cons, *op. cit.*, p. 79, and pp. 148-154). There were at least twenty different versions of the *Procès de Paradis* in the fifteenth century, some in the form of poems, some as prologues to *Mystères*. The work called *Mystère du procès de miséricorde et justice* is an elaboration of the trial scene in Greban's *Mystère de la Passion*. These works were popular and read particularly in clerical circles. Some of them were probably written by *docteurs en droit canon*.

21. The church lawyers studied only canon law, and many of them were regarded as ignorant. "A peine ont-ils entendu le commentaire d'un livre de droit, les avocats s'arrogent la mission de plaider dans les causes ecclésiastiques. Et parce qu'ils ignorent la substance du droit, ils se livrent à de détestables fraudes qui embarrassent la procédure" (Paul Fournier, *Les Officialités au moyen âge*, Paris, 1880, p. 33). In 1581, the Council of Lambeth ruled that three years of study of canon and civil (but of course not of Roman) law be made a prerequisite for the baccalaureate in canon law.

amateur advocate? He is twice called an *avocat potatif*. Granting that *potatif* is a word coined by the author to suggest both *portatif* and *putatif* (as may well be the case), then, if *évêque portatif* meant a bishop without a see, *avocat potatif* would mean a clerical lawyer without a court, i.e. unlicensed.²² The word *portatif* was essentially an ecclesiastical term in the fifteenth century.²³ Finally, when Pathelin, after the trial, is trying to convince the draper that the latter has mistaken him for someone else, and says:

*Je vous diray, sans plus attendre,
pour qui vous me cuidés prendre:
esse point pour Esservellé?
(levant son chaperon)
Voy! Nennin, il n'est point pelé
comme je suis, dessus la teste.*

is it not more than probable that he is displaying a tonsure?²⁴

All in all, I am strongly inclined to believe that Pathelin represents a cleric of the lowest class, a *lecteur* who ekes out a meager stipend by offering his services as an "advocate" to litigants attracted to the local sittings of the *official*.²⁵ Pathelin is the very archetype of the *avocat à*

22. See note 7 *supra*.

23. Both times the expression is used in the play it is coupled with a clerical reference, (a) *avocat potatif à trois leçons et trois psaulmes* (ll. 770-771), and (b) *il n'a pas le visaige ainsi potatif, ne si fade* (ll. 1521-1522). Does not the word *fade* suggest the clerical pallor, rather than the raddled, red-veined face of the drunkard, as Holbrook thinks (*Etude*, pp. 61-62). There is no other reference in the play to Pathelin's drinking.

24. Ll. 1508-1512. Professor Cons also considers this likely (*op. cit.*, p. 40). It would be like the author of this farce not to miss a chance for a vaudeville trick. Undoubtedly, both Pathelin's action, and the mention of Esservellé, had a special comical meaning for the spectators, as did the reference immediately after to Jehan de Noyon. These persons were evidently well known to the audience. May they not have been lawyers or Basochiens of Paris (or Rouen)? Or former Basochiens now sunk to the level of *praticiens*?

Assumption of the tonsure, even without the consent of the ecclesiastical authorities, was very common at the time. Celibacy was not required in the minor orders (porter, reader, exorcist, acolyte), and the principal requirement for entrance into one of these orders was just the amount of learning that Pathelin has. The trouble the author takes at the outset to define the state of Pathelin's education is a most important factor in determining his status.

It is interesting to note that the merchant himself may claim to be a cleric. Philip the Fair complained of the protection the church was giving to merchants who took the tonsure to escape pursuit for debts. In his time, 20,000 merchants were said to be using this stratagem, but the abuse had been much reduced by the time of Pathelin.

25. The costume worn by Pathelin, both in and out of the court room, may be observed in the woodcuts made for the Pierre Levet edition in 1489 (reproduced by Richard Holbrook in his English version of the play, W. H. Baker and Co., Boston, 1914). It is a simple clerical costume, without special distinguishing details. In the illustration of the court room scene, he is not wearing or carrying a *chaperon*, the chief distinguishing mark of the advocate, unless it is hanging down his back. In the first illustration, he is seen wearing an *écritoire*, which would seem to indicate that the illustrator thought of him as a solicitor (*procureur*).

simple tonsure, a self-styled, more or less self-taught practitioner, a would-be advocate who is a graduate of no college, a member of no law society . . . in short, an ignorant but clever rogue. He is a scape-grace even among the free-lance *practiciens* who hang about village courts, combining the functions of solicitor and advocate, matching their wits against the malice and cunning of peasant and villager. Lawyers, even such as they, seldom underwent the degradation of the pillory as Pathelin did.²⁶ Satire of such a person is not satire of the lawyers, of "ceulx . . . qui dient qu'i sont advocas." Indeed, Pathelin represents only in part a satire of an unlicensed village legal practitioner. He is a highly individualized character; there is much in him that is of himself alone, and not characteristic of the ordinary village lawyer. After all, Pathelin is a sort of hero, one for whom the author intends us to feel a more or less reluctant admiration.²⁷

But granting for the moment that the characterization of Pathelin represents a satire of his kind of lawyer, let us examine the author's treatment of the judge. Is the judge satirized? Some commentators have said so; they think that he is in too much of a hurry, and they do not like his inviting Pathelin to sup with him (ll. 1499-1500). No one has said that the judge is not satirized. Most simply ignore him, or include him in some general statement to the effect that all the characters in the play are rogues. Now it must be admitted that down to the court room scene they are, indeed, a pack of rogues. The greedy draper tries to cheat his customer, only to have Pathelin and his wife cheat him. Aignelet has made away with his master's sheep, and Pathelin, knowing him to be guilty, advises him to cheat the law, only to be himself cheated in the end. As Ernest Renan says: "C'est la friponnerie en action, un monde de voleurs, où le plus honnête homme (encore ne l'est-il pas tout à fait), le drapier, est le plus sacrifié."²⁸ But at this point

26. Guillemette reminds Pathelin of the Saturday he spent in the pillory (ll. 486-489). Is it any wonder that he is losing his clients, that everyone is calling him an *avocat dessoubz l'orme* (l. 13). Yet Holbrook is loath to admit that Pathelin represents an *avocaillon sans valeur* (*Maître Pierre Pathelin*, p. 125).

Advocates, even unlicensed ones, seldom fell as low as this. The profession was jealous of its honor, and when a lawyer was dishonest he was sometimes severely punished. In the year 1518, a lawyer was hanged for changing the wording of a deed so as to favor his client, a certain abbot, in a real property action (See *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris*, ed. Lalanne, Paris, 1854, p. 67). But this was evidently a nine-days' wonder.

27. It is perhaps worth noting that in the farce called *Le Nouveau Pathelin*, inspired by the original Pathelin, it is a priest who is chiefly ridiculed, and there is a shocking disrespect for the confessional. Ridicule of clerics is much more common in the comic theatre of the Middle Ages than satire of lawyers.

28. Ernest Renan, *Pages choisies*, Paris, 1896, p. 196. This is typical of all general commentaries on the farce.

a new character is introduced, the judge. Is he, too, dishonest, as Renan implies?

I do not think so, and I do not think that the author intended us to feel that the judge is derelict, or even unsympathetic, in the performance of his duties.

The treatment of the judge is very interesting as revealing the author's viewpoint and intentions. Yet it has received very little notice. The way in which Gustave Cohen dismisses him, saying: "il n'est qu'un comparse"²⁹ is typical of the attitude the critics have taken. It is true that the role of the judge is a comparatively minor one, that he is introduced perhaps chiefly as a necessary functionary in the court room scene, but he is far from being merely a non-speaking, figurant character as Professor Cohen says. During the trial scene, which extends through about one-sixth of the play, the judge has much to say. He is the central figure on the stage, and he directs the trial with spirit and close attention. His characterization is perhaps somewhat sketchy, but it is sufficient to indicate his essential qualities as a judge, and as a person. An examination of the trial scene will show, I think, that the judge is honest, fair, reasonably intelligent, painstaking and sympathetic.

Let me say at the outset that I cannot accept the observation sometimes made that the trial scene has only a sort of classical, generalized realism, and that the author's intention was to make his lawyer and judge represent the generality of their professions. If the judge is an itinerant *official*, as I maintain, then the trial is almost photographic in its realism.³⁰ The procedure in such courts was quite as informal as this. Some insignificant details are omitted in the interest of unity and

29. Gustave Cohen, *Le Théâtre en France au moyen âge*, II: *Le Théâtre profane*, Paris, 1931, p. 95.

30. Professor Cons, in his brilliant and, on the whole, convincing exposition of his reasons for ascribing the authorship of the play to Guillaume Alecis, raises, as an argument against possible Basoche authorship, the point that the trial scene is free from an exaggerated use of technical terms of procedure (*op. cit.*, pp. 35-36). The use of such terms in court room scenes in the farce comedies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries usually corresponds to actual procedure in the sort of law court represented. There is all the difference in the world between the procedure used in the court of an ambulatory *official*, and that required in the court of a royal *bailli*. In Coquillart's *Plaidoyé de la simple et de la rusée*, an action for alienation of affection, properly a matter for an ecclesiastical judge, is treated as a disturbance of a possession of real property, so that the case comes under the jurisdiction of a royal *bailli*, and is tried with all the pomp and formalities necessary in his court, a most amusing proceeding for an audience composed of fifteenth century lawyers, but dull for the present-day layman to read.

But in any case, mock heroic use of the procedure of high courts of justice was not the only comic device used by the farce writers of the Basoche. Basoche farces are distinguishable by their expression of the Basoche point of view.

tempo, but actually there was little difficulty in reconciling nature and art in this scene. The details given are authentic, and the manner in which the judge conducts the trial, the order in which it proceeds, the questions asked by lawyer and judge, even the confusion of plaintiff-witness-advocate, all this is excellent realism.³¹

When Pathelin enters the court, he doffs his hat, greets the judge and is bidden to cover himself.³² The judge then addresses those present:

LE JUGE

*S'il y a riens, qu'on se delivre
tantost, afin que je me lieve.*

LE DRAPPIER

*Mon advocat vient, qui acheve
ung peu de chose qu'il faisoit,
Monseigneur, et, si'v' vous plaisoit,
vous feriez bien de l'atendre.*

LE JUGE

*Hé dea, j'ay ailleurs a entendre!
se vostre partie est presente,
delivrez vous sans plus d'atente.
Et n'estes vous pas demandeur?*

LE DRAPPIER

Si suis.

LE JUGE

*Ou est le defendeur?
Est il cy present en personne?*

LE DRAPPIER

*Ouï: vez le la qui ne sonne
mot, mais Dieu scet ce qu'il en pense.*

LE JUGE

*Puis que vous estes en presence,
vous deux, faictes vostre demande.*³³

31. Holbrook, in his English acting version, provides for an outdoor setting, but the woodcut illustration of the trial scene (printed in the 1489 Levet edition) indicates an interior, and probably an ecclesiastical interior, with its carved fleur-de-lys. The official was usually more fortunate in this respect than the seigniorial judge, for the seignior often failed to provide a shelter, even in the eighteenth century.

32. This was a regular piece of business at the beginning of farce court room scenes, and was founded on actual practice.

33. Ll. 1221-1236.

How easy it would have been to have introduced, at the beginning of the court room scene, a conversation between the judge and his clerk, or between the judge and the draper, in which the honesty of the judge might have been impugned! Instead, the judge proceeds in a brisk, impartial manner, asking the necessary questions, losing as little time as possible. It is especially significant that he does not favor the draper, the (comparatively) rich man. He refuses to wait for the draper's lawyer. Nor is he to be blamed for this refusal: judges were not (and are not) in the habit of waiting for tardy advocates. To do so would be to expose the court to all sorts of possible abuses. And this judge has another hearing later that day. He must dispose of the business of the court without unnecessary delay.³⁴

The draper begins to state his case with all the air of an old hand at the game. The judge interrupts him only to ask a vital question: is the defendant the legally hired man of the plaintiff? At this point Pathelin, who has been keeping out of sight, comments that if the draper has dared to keep a man in his service without a proper hiring contract . . . ! The draper, seeking the source of this interruption, recognizes the man who tricked him out of his cloth. Avarice is the draper's ruling passion, and it is not surprising that he becomes immediately confused and incapable of keeping his mind on the matter in hand. From this point on the judge is unable to obtain any lucid statement of claim from the agitated and soon incoherent draper, who mingles cloth and sheep in his argument in what seems to the judge to be an utterly incomprehensible fashion.³⁵

However, the judge does not at first ignore the remarks that the draper addresses to Pathelin about the cloth. He asks the latter to explain, and Pathelin does so in a way calculated to deceive a reasonably intelligent judge. The draper, he suggests, has been taken off his guard by the judge's refusal to wait for his advocate, and has forgotten the details of the story he and the missing advocate had concocted. The confusion of the draper, coming immediately upon the judge's question about the legal relationship between him and his shepherd, must have added strength to Pathelin's suggestion in the mind of the judge. Pathelin further explains the talk about cloth in a clever and logical fashion. The draper, on the other hand, makes no comprehensi-

34. One of the advantages the church courts offered to litigants was the summary procedure adopted in accordance with the decretals of Clement V, the first Avignon pope. Ecclesiastical judges often dispensed with advocates and questioned the parties themselves, thus disposing of the case more quickly, less expensively and often more justly.

35. The confusion of the draper has been led up to cleverly by his confusion of cloth and sheep in his conversation with Aignelet before the trial (ll. 1035-1052).

ble charge or statement at all, and the judge, puzzled, but seeing that the cloth does not enter into the suit he is supposed to be hearing, devotes himself henceforth to an attempt to bring the draper back to the question of the sheep: "Sus! revenons a ces moutons: qu'en fust il?"

The draper makes a final, desperate effort to collect his wits, to state his complaint (ll. 1314-1344). But the ever-present sight of the knave who tricked him out of his cloth exerts a magnetism so powerful that he cannot force his reason to follow a straight and logical course. Time after time, his tongue involuntarily betrays his confusion of mind. He speaks only in unintelligible (and apparently unrelated) fragments. The patience of the judge is here truly remarkable. He gives the draper every chance to tell his story, but when, after several attempts, Joceaulme concludes just where he had begun, the judge is finally led to say: "Il n'y a ne rime ne rayson en tout quanc vous rafardez. Qu'essey?" Pathelin is ready with the suggestion that the draper has kept back the salary of the poor, imbecile shepherd, and is afraid the truth will come out. The draper, infuriated, can only scream: "Par la teste Dieu, vous l'avez!" which the judge finds unintelligible. And when the judge asks him: "Qu'essey qu'il a?" the draper, remembering that he should be sticking to the matter of the sheep, replies: "Rien, mon seigneur."

This is the second time that the judge has directly questioned the draper about the cloth, although it is not apparently pertinent to the matter before the court. The first time, the draper missed his chance to explain because of the adroit interpolations of Pathelin. This time, it is principally because of his own confusion, which arises from his cupidity. He tells the judge that the cloth means nothing at all. Can the judge be expected to show any further interest in it? I think not.

Pathelin now asks permission to act for the defendant, and he speedily demonstrates that Aignelet is entitled to the protection that the church gave to the weak of mind. He asks for dismissal of the suit:

PATHELIN

*Envoyez le garder ses bestes,
sans jour; que jamais ne retourne!
Que maudit soit il qui ajourne
telz folz, ne ne fait adjourner!*

LE DRAPPIER

*Et l'en fera l'en retourner
avant que je puisse estre ouÿ?*

After the patient hearing the judge has already given the draper, all to no purpose, the draper's complaint is as comical as it is ridiculous.³⁶

The judge, however, is still patient. He threatens to adjourn the hearing, since the defendant appears to be *non compos mentis*, and the plaintiff not much better. But he does not do so immediately. For another seventy-five lines of dialogue, he listens to the arguments of the draper, who is now more incoherent than ever, with Pathelin cross-examining him. Such patience on the part of a busy judge who must hold court in another place that day exceeds the requirements of justice, and passes the bounds of verisimilitude. The author of the play, having established a splendid comedy situation, is loath to bring it to an end, wants to use it for all it is worth, to extract the last possible details of comic business from it. Towards the end, the scene becomes a little tedious for the spectator. What, indeed, must it have been for the judge?

The judge is the only person in the play who is not dishonest, who does not show the exaggeration of some vice.³⁷ His final words express the viewpoint of a reasonable man who finds himself among fools and rogues. His kindness to the shepherd, whom he believes to be a poor, witless wretch, is especially notable:

LE JUGE (à Pathelin et au drappier)
*C'est une droicte cornardie
 que de vous deux: ce n'est que noise.
 M'aist Dieu! je los que je m'en voise.*
 (il se lève, puis au berger)
*Va t'en, mon amy; ne retourne
 jamais, pour sergent qui t'ajourne.
 La court t'assoult, entens tu bien?*

Of the many critics who have said, or implied, that the *Farce de Maistre Pierre Pathelin* contains a biting satire of the administration of justice, Professor Cohen makes the most direct charges against the judge:

... il représente le magistrat plus pressé d'aller à ses plaisirs et à ses affaires que de chercher la vérité et de rendre bonne et claire justice.³⁸

But there is nothing in the text to indicate that the judge was anxious

36. A Basoche audience, grouped about the Table de Marbre in the Palais de Justice, would have been convulsed by it.

37. In this judge there is none of that dishonesty that Rabelais complains of in ambulant magistrates of the sort, none of that "énorme concussion que voions hui entre ces juges pédanés sous l'orme."

38. G. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

to go "à ses plaisirs."³⁹ It is true that the judge wishes to dispose of the case as expeditiously as possible, but his haste is expressed only in the word and not at all in the deed. What prevents the draper from presenting his case is not the judge's haste but the derangement that results from his own avarice.⁴⁰ As to the judge inviting the recently pilloried Pathelin to sup with him, it is absurd to see in this a satire of the judge. A traveling judge, trying civil cases, might well not have known anything about what the local criminal judge had done with Pathelin since he last saw the lawyer. And, after all, with whom would the judge sup? Pathelin seems to be the only other member of the profession present.

The judge is the only person in the play who is not satirized, who is not a caricature, who is not farcical at all. The audience laughs with him, and if they laugh at him at all, it is because he is an honest and dignified man put into a ridiculous position.⁴¹ He represents law and order; his artistic function in the play is to set off the gibberish of the draper, the idiocy of the shepherd and the abnormality of Pathelin. The judge is just the sort of person we might expect an *official forain* to be, a man of ordinary intelligence and ordinary sentiments, moderately well educated, harassed by the endless round of petty court sittings, impatient (but not too impatient) with litigants like Joceaulme, sympathetic towards the poor and afflicted, eager enough to do justice but defeated at every turn by the subtleties of small-town intrigue and the stupidity and malice of village litigants, by peasant craft, by merchant hypocrisy, and by the sinuous tactics of the shyster.⁴²

We may feel that the whole situation illustrates the futility of the attempts of the church to provide ecclesiastical justice for classes of persons like Joceaulme and Aignelet, but I doubt that any such idea was uppermost in the author's mind. Obviously, his principal intention

39. The judge has another sitting . . . "j'ay ailleurs a entendre!" He is, in fact, *pressé*.

40. The fact that the judge urges haste is in his favor, for it is in the interests of justice. As Paul Fournier says, speaking of ecclesiastical judges: "Le juge veille seulement à réprimer les longueurs des avocats et des procureurs, et à arrêter les dépositions des témoins trop nombreux et inutiles à la cause" (*op. cit.*, pp. 231-232). That the lengthy arguments of lawyers had become an abuse is evident from the Ordonnances of 1364, 1446 and 1453, curbing the prolixity of the advocates. One Thomas Basin had, in 1445, the idea of suppressing all oral pleadings (*Œuvres de Thomas Basin*, ed. by Quicherat, Paris, 18—, pp. 31-65).

41. Professor Cons says: "... car le juge prend sa part, sa belle part, de toute cette satire" (*op. cit.*, p. 54), but he does not enlarge on this simple statement.

42. Estienne Pasquier has the jurist's viewpoint in the matter when he remarks: "Mon-sieur le juge se trouve bien empesché, mesmement qu'il n'étoit question que de moutons en la cause, néanmoins que le drapier y entremesloit son drap . . ." (*Recherches de la France*, Amsterdam, 1723, I, 701).

was to excite the hearty laughter of his audience, not cynical smiles or indignant protests. There has been a tendency to take the play too seriously as a social document.⁴³ In essence, it is merely a brilliant variation on the popular old theme of *trompeur trompé*, put in a rural setting and told by a sophisticate for sophisticates. The viewpoint of the author is substantially like that of the judge in the play . . . "c'est une droicte cornardie!" It is the viewpoint of the professional man, of the well-educated and worldly man, whether clerk or layman, bishop or bailiff.⁴⁴ In the trial scene, it is substantially the viewpoint of the Basochiens who, in their plays, directed the weight of their satire against the litigants and witnesses whose malice and stupidity they saw in action every day at the Palais, or, occasionally, against village lawyers and judges whose pretensions seemed ridiculous when compared with the authentic pomp and glory of the Parlement.⁴⁵ An audience composed of persons connected with the Palais de Justice or the colleges at Paris or Rouen would have appreciated the full humor of the opening scene, and of the trial scene. In fact, the play has an especial appeal for similar classes of persons today.⁴⁶

43. It seems that even so penetrating a critic as Ernest Renan could say: "L'impression que laisse Pathelin est, pour nous, des plus tristes: on ne s'empêche de plaindre le temps où un avilissement de la nature humaine que rien ne compense a provoqué autre chose que le dégoût" (*op. cit.*, p. 198). Surely the fact that a Basoche audience was probably amused by the absurdities and clever turns of a situation in which a number of rogues take turns in outwitting each other should not lead us to form gloomy conclusions as to the moral state of that audience, or of the society of the time. Renan saw in the play a degeneration of the courts of justice, but surely it is possible merely to say, with the judge: "C'est une droicte cornardie!"

44. It is impossible, I feel, to make the sharp distinction between the clerical viewpoint and the lay viewpoint that Professor Cons does, at least in respect to this play. He says: "Pathelin vient non du Palais, mais de l'Eglise, sent non le robin, mais le prêtre" (*op. cit.*, p. 175). At the beginning of the sixteenth century, about one-half the advocates of Paris were clerics. G. Coquillart, author of the *Plaidoyé de la simple et de la rusée*, was a *docteur en droit canon*, and ecclesiastical judge of the metropolitan church of Rheims. To my mind, the *Farce de Maistre Pathelin* smacks of both cleric and lawyer.

In his eagerness to advance every possible argument for an exclusively clerical authorship of the play, Professor Cons even suggests that the author made the shepherd the winner of the game of *trompeur trompé* because shepherds, even sly, brutal fellows like Aiguellet, have had a special claim to the grace of God . . . and of clerics . . . ever since they were privileged to discover the Star of Bethlehem (*op. cit.*, pp. 52-54).

45. Even in Eustache Deschamps' *Farce de Mestre Trubert et d'Antrognart* (not really a farce at all, and yet the only work usually cited, along with the *Farce de Pathelin*, to support the allegation that advocates and judges are satirized wherever they appear in the comic theatre of the Middle Ages), it is the litigant that is treated with searing contempt, not the lawyer. No one seems to have noticed that this play offers the strange spectacle of a village shyster rebuking a would-be client for his inhumanity in having a man imprisoned for stealing a piece of fruit from his garden. Pathelin and Trubert are not representative of the treatment of the advocate in the medieval farce, any more than Thevot represents the usual treatment of the judge. And all three are villagers.

46. In all the apparent rapport between the play and the Basoche, there is nothing that

On whom does the burden of the satire fall in the *Farce de Maître Pierre Pathelin*? Never on the judge, always on the litigant. It is the greedy draper, the stupid plaintiff who cannot even make a clear statement of his claim, that is ridiculed, not the court.⁴⁷ On Pathelin, the freshwater lawyer, the satire falls very lightly, for Pathelin is really the hero of the play. There was probably some intention to make fun of the class of lawyers he represents, but Pathelin grows into a remarkable personality, the only personality in the comic theatre of the time to emerge triumphant from the sixteenth-century discard of things medieval. His *patelinage* has continued to evoke amused tolerance in France, and over the whole face of the earth. That he is a lawyer in the play, was largely an accidental matter of plot. He is, above all, the first great, French incarnation of the *picaro*.

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is really opposed to the theory that the play was written by Guillaume Alecis. There is no reason why a cleric, even a monk, should not have written it. Alecis, from what Professor Cons has revealed of his character, would have made an excellent jurist. He had the legal temperament; a shrewd observer and caustic critic, he was no sentimentalist. Little is known about his early life. Is it possible that he studied law at Paris or Rouen? Can he have been at any time associated with the Basoche? He was probably familiar with their plays. Is it likely that the *Farce de Maître Pathelin* was his first play?

47. There may have been some special reason, aside from the exigencies of the plot, for a draper being made the chief butt of the author's ridicule. Professor Cons remarks that the abbey of Lyre, where Alecis lived, had trouble with drapers (*op. cit.*, p. 81). The Basochiens of Paris had a long-standing feud with the drapers. The Basoche had a law court of its own, one of whose chief functions seems to have been the judging of lawsuits brought by the drapers of Paris against the clerks.

DÉFENSE DU CONFIDENT

DANS LE PREMIER NUMÉRO de la revue internationale *Helicon* (Septembre 1938), M. Baldensperger, sous le titre "Hypothèses et vérifications en histoire littéraire," défendait le droit pour le critique d'émettre une hypothèse, pourvu qu'elle fût bien fondée et susceptible de vérification.

L'objet de cette étude est justement un effort pour vérifier expérimentalement une hypothèse *a priori*. Cette hypothèse concerne le *confident*, personnage généralement peu goûté, mal compris, et fort négligé,¹ de notre tragédie classique.

Nous n'étudierons pas le confident du point de vue de la technique

1. Il est curieux de constater que si les personnages secondaires de la comédie ont été consciencieusement étudiés (cf. les travaux de Rigal, Fournel, Leclercq, Marc Monnier, etc.), aucune étude complète n'a été entreprise jusqu'à présent sur les personnages secondaires de la tragédie, sans doute à cause du lieu commun, du préjugé, qui fait du confident un personnage "nul."

La première critique de fond adressée au confident semble sortie de la plume de Houdar de La Motte, "Troisième Discours à l'occasion de la tragédie d'Inès de Castro," *Œuvres*, Paris, 1754, IV, 277 ss. D'après lui, le confident ne serait "qu'un simple témoin . . . ne prenant pas plus de part à l'action que le spectateur . . . [il] sert de prétexte pour instruire le spectateur de ce qu'il faut qu'il sache . . . les scènes de confidence ne sont que des monologues déguisés", etc., etc. Ces critiques ont été reprises presque mot pour mot par J. de La Porte et S. R. Chamfort dans leur *Dictionnaire dramatique*, Paris, 1776, I, art. "Confident" et "Exposition."

Les Romantiques, naturellement, se moquent du confident. Cf. Musset, *Fantasio*, II, 5: "Avez-vous le dessein de me comparer à un confident de tragédie, et craignez-vous que je ne suive votre ombre en déclamant?" demande ironiquement Fantasio à Elsbeth. Parmi les réalistes, cf. Murger, *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1848), au chapitre intitulé: "Ali Rodolphe ou le Turc par nécessité."

Pour en revenir à des critiques plus sérieuses, Taine, dans son "Essai sur Racine" (1858), qui, à côté de quelques vues profondes, renferme beaucoup de naïvetés déconcertantes et d'idées préconçues, accuse les confidents de "servir de déversoir; ils essuient l'épanchement des paroles comme un mouchoir l'épanchement des larmes" (*Nouveaux Essais de critique et d'histoire*, Paris, 1901, p. 124 ss.). Nisard, *Histoire de la littérature française*, Paris, 1867, III, 68, déclare: "Ils [les confidents] servent, soit à épargner aux personnages principaux des monologues, soit à tenir la place de l'interlocuteur véritable qui n'arrive pas." A la page 60 il parle des "oiseuses répliques d'un confident." Et pourtant, Nisard lui aussi a souvent des vues fort justes sur le classicisme.

Paul Albert, dans sa *Littérature française au XVII^e siècle*, Paris, 1873, parle "du long cortège des ternes confidents . . . décidément impossibles" (p. 330).

Au hasard, dans des ouvrages secondaires, nous relevons: Ludovic Cellier (pseud. de Louis Leclercq), *Les Valets au théâtre*, Paris, 1875, p. 135: "Toutes les tragédies contiennent le même confident";—Souriau, *De la convention*, etc. . . , Paris, 1885, p. 39: "des utilités . . . des ombres qui suivent silencieusement leur maître, parlent et se taisent à volonté"; le confident est un personnage "insignifiant et sacrifié," etc.;—M. Dutrait, *Crébillon*, Bordeaux, 1895, p. 244: en fait un "acteur nul, ne prenant à ce qui se passe aucune part, aucun intérêt" . . . "une ombre [qui n'a] pas d'autre raison d'être que d'écouter";—Paul Dupont, dans sa thèse sur *Houdar de La Motte*, Paris, 1898, traite les confidents "d'insupportables comparses."

dramatique. On pourrait certes montrer à quel point il est indispensable à cette tragédie psychologique et "concentrée" dont parle si pertinemment M. R. Bray.² L'étude des rares tragédies sans confidents, le *Venceslas* de Rotrou (1647), par exemple, ou la *Pulchérie* de Corneille (1672) prouverait que, à cause précisément de l'absence de confident,³ l'analyse psychologique fait place à l'imbroglio de situation. Mais nous n'envisagerons ici le problème que du point de vue *humain*; nous nous limiterons au *principe* même de la confiance. On accuse d'une manière générale le confident d'être impersonnel, inactif et invraisemblable—de n'être qu'une "utilité," une copie sans vie du modèle fourni par les Anciens. Les deux premières de ces critiques sont d'ordre technique; c'est à la dernière seule, l'argument d'invraisemblance, que nous nous proposons de répondre ici.

Et tout d'abord, est-il admissible que les classiques, uniquement intéressés par le côté "humain" de leurs personnages; soucieux de plaire à un public qui, selon le mot de Taine, "allait au théâtre pour juger la vie,"⁴ moins avides de couleur historique que de vérité contemporaine—après tout, Polyeucte jouait en pourpoint, et Phèdre en robe de velours amarante; qui attachaient l'importance que nous savons aux bien-séances et à cette vraisemblance même au nom de laquelle on veut condamner le confident; est-il admissible qu'ils aient simplement copié un de leurs personnages, même secondaire, sur les auteurs tragiques ou épiques de la Grèce ou de Rome? Est-il admissible qu'ils aient laissé à une place aussi terriblement en vue un personnage soi-disant invraisemblable? Bien plus, comment se fait-il que ces auteurs, si préoccupés des *détails* de leur art, n'aient pas pris la peine de justifier le confident, élément indispensable, nous le répétons, de leur conception dramatique? Corneille, par exemple, qui s'est attaché à légitimer ce qu'il appelle le "personnage protatique,"⁵ qui est, lui, vraiment une "utilité," n'a

2. Cf. R. Bray, *La Formation de la doctrine classique en France*, Paris, 1927, p. 327 ss. Selon cet auteur, les principes qui modèlent la figure de la tragédie classique sont: la règle de la vraisemblance, la loi de la concentration, le goût de la psychologie.

3. Un des rares critiques qui ait touché, du reste incidemment, au confident avec quelque compréhension, est M. Le Bidois, dans son étude sur *La Vie dans la tragédie de Racine*, Paris, 1901. Mettant en valeur la clarté psychologique qui règne dans la tragédie classique, il déclare (p. 227): "Le poète . . . a fait mouvoir d'avance sous nos yeux tous les ressorts de l'âme . . ." Ajoutons: grâce au confident!

4. Taine, *op. cit.*, p. 139—Nisard, *op. cit.*, p. 30: l'Andromaque de Racine n'est pas celle d'Homère, ni de Virgile, ni d'Euripide, mais *la femme contemporaine* de Racine. Rappelons que Ronsard déjà, dans sa Préface posthume à la *Franciade* (*Œuvres*, édition Marty-Laveaux, Paris, 1890, III, 522) parlait de "la Tragédie . . . miroir de la vie humaine"—et Grevin, dès 1561, dans la Préface de son *Jules César*, de "la Tragédie, représentation de vérité."

5. Dans son "Premier Discours du poème dramatique," édition Marty-Laveaux, Paris,

jamais, que je sache, ni attaqué, ni défendu le confident.⁶ Pourquoi? Sans doute parce qu'il estimait n'en avoir pas besoin.

A priori donc, le confident n'est pas invraisemblable; il est, aux yeux du public du XVII^e siècle, aussi vivant que les autres personnages. Beaucoup de ces confidents ont, du reste, réellement vécu, sont historiques: la Charmion et le Photin de *Pompée*, pour ne prendre qu'un exemple, se trouvent dans Plutarque. Henri Estienne, dès 1578,⁷ comparait justement ce même Photin et l'Achorée de Lucain, copié plus tard par Corneille pour son *Pompée*, à des courtisans, l'un "meschant homme" et l'autre "homme de bien." Il avançait ainsi Taine de 280 ans exactement, Taine qui, lui aussi, dans son *Essai sur Racine*,⁸ assimile le confident aux courtisans. Mais si cette comparaison rend, dans une certaine mesure, la vie au confident, c'est, il faut bien l'admettre, une vie singulièrement limitée.

Allons franchement plus loin: le confident est un personnage de la vie courante, de la vie de tous les jours. Après tout, le gouverneur, la gouvernante, la nourrice, le "menin," la dame d'honneur, ne sont pas des créations théâtrales. Comprenez bien toutefois que nous ne cherchons pas ici la *source* de tel ou tel confident: nous disons simplement que, dans le cas qui nous occupe, il n'est point besoin de remonter au coryphée, mais que la "confidence" existe quotidiennement et a toujours existé. Malheur à l'homme, comme le Moïse de Vigny, qui n'a pas de confident! Ou, comme dit Branthôme:

J'ay oui tenir à feu M. de Guyse dernier M. de la Chastre pour un très-bon et brave capitaine; aussy le choisit-il tel et le prit pour son fidelle confident. . . . Ce n'est pas d'ast'heure que les grands capitaines se sont associez de bons confidans, mais c'est de tout temps.⁹

Si Branthôme a raison, si le confident est un personnage vivant, nous devons nous attendre à le découvrir là où est conservée la vie d'une époque, dans l'histoire et surtout dans les mémoires. Or, c'est très exactement ce qui se passe. Les mémoires d'avant 1630,—nous négligerons volontairement les autres, de peur que l'emploi du mot de plus

1862, I, 45 ss., et aussi à plusieurs reprises dans ses "Examens": celui de *Médée*, de *Rodogune*, par exemple. Des personnages prototypiques seraient Pollux (dans *Médée*), Timagène (dans *Rodogune*), Pylade (dans *Andromaque*), Abner (dans *Athalie*).

6. Pourtant il s'occupe souvent des conditions de la confiance, par exemple dans les Examens de *Clitandre*, *Horace*, *Polyeucte*, *Pompée*, *Don Sanche*, *Rodogune*, *Pertharite*, *Heraclius*. Mais il n'a jamais mis en jeu le principe même de la confiance. De même l'abbé D'Aubignac dans sa *Dissertation*, etc. . . ., 1663.

7. *Deux Dialogues du nouveau langage françois italianizé*, édition Alcide Bonneau, Paris, 1883, I, 252.

8. Taine, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

9. Branthôme, *Œuvres*, édition Elzévirienne (13 vol.), Paris, 1858-1894, VI, 187.

en plus étendu au théâtre¹⁰ n'ait influencé les écrivains,¹¹—ces mémoires donc, ceux de Marguerite de Valois, Martin du Bellay, Lanoue, de L'Estoile, d'Aubigné, etc., et surtout ceux de Branthôme, les plus vivants de tous, contiennent et le mot et la chose, et en telle abondance que nous n'avons que l'embarras du choix.

Voici par exemple un Phoenix assez savoureux, dont Branthôme nous a transmis le souvenir.¹² Il paraît que le comte d'Angoulême, gendre de Louis XII, à qui il devait succéder sous le nom de François I^{er}, faisait un peu trop la cour à sa jeune belle-mère, la reine Marie d'Angleterre, troisième femme, sans enfant, de Louis XII:

M. de Grignaux [nous raconte notre auteur] seigneur tres-sage et avisé, lequel avoit esté chevalier d'honneur de la reine Anne et l'estoit encore de la reine Marie, voyant que le mystere s'en alloit jouer, remonstra à mondict sieur d'Angoulesme la faute qu'il alloit faire, et luy dict en se courrouçant:

"Comment, Pasque-Dieu! (car tel estoit son jurement) que voulez-vous faire? Ne voyez-vous pas que cette femme qui est fine et caute, vous veut attirer à elle afin que vous l'engrossiez? Et si elle vient à avoir un fils, vous voilà encore simple comte d'Angoulesme et jamais Roy de France comme vous espérez. Le roy son mary est vieux et meshuy ne luy peut faire enfants. Vous l'irez toucher et vous vous approcherez si bien d'elle, que vous qui estes jeune et chaud et elle de mesme, Pasque-Dieu! elle prendra comme à glu, et elle fera un enfant, et vous voilà bien! Apres vous pourrez bien dire: Adieu ma part du royaume de France. Par quoy, songez-y! . . ."

M. d'Angoulesme y songea de faict, et protesta d'y estre sage et s'en desporter. . .

Evidemment, ce n'est pas là tout à fait la situation de Pyrrhus, ou de Titus, ni le langage de Phoenix ou de Paulin, mais ce clairvoyant confident-gouverneur d'un futur grand roi valait la peine d'être mentionné.

Voici cette fois une situation typique, un Burrhus et un Narcisse en chair et en os auprès d'un petit Néron du XVI^e siècle qui, s'il ne brûla pas Rome, mit du moins Paris à feu et à sang. C'est Branthôme encore¹³ qui nous dépeint les effets de la double influence sur Charles IX de son bon gouverneur, M. de Scipierre, et de son méchant confident, Albert Gondy. Il nous cite plusieurs traits d'hypocrisie, de dissimulation et de cruauté du roi: l'hypocrite visite à Coligny après l'attentat de Montravel; les coups d'arquebuse sur les huguenots dans

10. Le mot "confident" semble avoir fait sa première apparition au théâtre dans une curieuse tragi-comédie de Mairet, *Chryséide et Arimand*, qui est de 1625; cf. édition H. C. Lancaster, Baltimore, 1925.

11. Comme c'est très certainement le cas pour Madame de La Fayette, par exemple, le cardinal de Retz, ou Saint-Simon. Retz est le créateur du mot "confidentissime" qu'il applique à Chavigny, une des "âmes damnées" de Richelieu.

12. *Op. cit.*, XII, 127.

13. *Op. cit.*, V, 222, et VI, 34, 250, 263.

"les faubourgs Saint Germain" la nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy; la lugubre visite au cadavre mutilé et puant de l'Amiral, au gibet de Montfaucon ("l'odeur de mon ennemi est tres-bonne," aurait dit le Roi aux courtisans qui "se bouchaient le nez à cause de la senteur"); la sadique exécution aux flambeaux des ministres protestants Briquemaud et Cabagnes quelques mois plus tard:

Et certes possible [dit Branthôme] il faut croire que veu la noble naissance de ce roy, sa noble nourriture sous . . . M. de Scipierre qui ne luy preschoit jamais que la valeur, la grandeur et l'ambition, comme je l'ay veu, il eust pu parvenir à la moitié, ou à la troisième partie de la grandeur . . . de Charlemagne. . . On disoit qu'il avoit appris d'estre ainsin dissimulateur de son grand favory, Albert Gondy, mareschal de Raiz, qui estoit un Florentin, fin, caut et corrompu, trinquart, grant menteur et dissimulateur . . . et apprit au roy à jurer, à faindre et à dissimuler . . . M. de Scipierre son gouverneur, qui estoit le plus généreux et le plus brave seigneur qui fust jamais gouverneur de roi . . . ne l'avoit jamais fait estudier dans les chapitres de la dissimulation . . . mais ledict mareschal de Raiz, dict Le Perron, le pervertit du tout et luy fit oublier et laisser toute la belle nourriture de ce brave gouverneur. . .

Voltaire qui était, paraît-il,¹⁴ choqué par l'Ephestion d'*Alexandre*, "fidèle confident du beau feu de son maître," au point de le traiter de "ridicule Ambassadeur d'Amour," n'avait sans doute jamais eu connaissance de l'ambassade dont M. de Nemours chargea, auprès de la reine Elisabeth d'Angleterre, M. de Lignerolles, "très-habile et accort gentilhomme et lors fort favory de M. de Nemours."¹⁵ Ce même Lignerolles est un excellent exemple du sort qui menace souvent un confident: comme la malheureuse et trop dévouée Œnone, il mourut des conseils qu'il osa donner. Il pria son roi de s'affranchir de la tutelle de la reine-mère: quand Catherine de Médicis en eut vent, elle fit tout simplement disparaître l'infortuné jeune homme.¹⁶ De même, le baron de Clairvaux, René de Villequier, tua sa femme dans un accès de jalousie, ainsi qu'"une de ses demoiselles qui luy tenoit le miroir."¹⁷ De même aussi le sieur Sampierro "ayant eu quelques soupçons de sa femme . . . l'estrangla luy-mesme de sa main de son escharpe blanche . . . et pour la bien ressusciter par belle ceremonie, il en fist de mesme

14. Cité dans le *Dictionnaire dramatique* de La Porte, Paris, 1776, art. "Confident," *in fine*.

15. Branthôme, *op. cit.*, XII, 351.

16. C'est la version de Tavannes. Branthôme (v, 81) et Le Duchat prétendent qu'il fut tué pour en avoir su trop long sur les projets des princes relatifs à la Saint Barthélemy: "Henri III, n'étant encore que duc d'Anjou, avoit fait confidence à Lignerolles du dessein qu'avoit la cour de se défaire des chefs huguenots . . . celui-ci ayant fait connaitre à Charles IX qu'il savait la chose, ce prince déterminà le duc son frère à faire tuer Lignerolles plus tost que plus tard de peur que par son babil les huguenots ne fussent advertis de ce qui se tramait contre eux." (Le Duchat)

17. Branthôme, *op. cit.*, XI, 20 (le 1^{er} septembre 1577, à Poitiers, où était la Cour).

à une demoiselle de sa dicte femme qui luy tenoit la main à ses amours.¹⁸ Mais nous frisons là un genre de "confidentes" dont les mémoires ne manquent pas, et que Branthôme appelle des Dariolettes, du nom de la confidente typique de l'Amadis; elles appartiennent plus à la comédie qu'à la tragédie; nous n'insisterons donc pas. Mais parmi d'authentiques confidentes de tragédie, du genre tant critiqué qui se contente d'écouter, plaindre et conseiller, nous citerons celle à qui Catherine de Médicis confiait ses soupçons sur son mari, Henri II, et Madame de Valentinois:

De quoy [rapporte Branthôme] en ayant fait sa complainte à une sienne grande dame favorite, elle complotta d'avec elle . . . d'espier . . . son mari et la dame. . . Cette princesse donc, ayant veu et apperceu le tout, de despit s'en mist à plorer, gémir, soupirer et attrister. . . L'autre dame qui l'accompagnoit se mist à la consoler et luy remonstrer pourquoy elle s'attristoit ainsin. . .¹⁹

Nous pourrions citer également Mlle de Changy et Louyse de Lorraine, femme de Henri III;²⁰ Mlle Torigny de Matignon et la reine Marguerite;²¹ la comtesse de Pancalier et Marguerite de Savoie;²² Charles IX et sa nourrice, "laquelle il aymoît si fort qu'il ne luy refusa jamais rien";²³ Louis XIII et sa nourrice qu'il appelait affectueusement "Mamanga."

Il y a bien d'autres relations entre les mémoires de la fin du XVI^e siècle et la tragédie classique. On y trouve d'authentiques *songes*: ceux de Catherine de Médicis que nous rapporte Marguerite de Valois²⁴ n'ont rien à envier à celui d'Athalie, non plus que celui de Marie de Médicis, rapporté par Batiffol,²⁵ avant l'attentat contre Concini. On y trouve également des *réçits* faits soit au roi, soit à la cour réunie pour les écouter;²⁶ et des *discours*²⁷ illustrant d'une manière frappante cette

18. *Ibid.*, XI, 21. Elle s'appelait Vanina d'Ornano.

19. *Ibid.*, XI, 312.

20. *Ibid.*, XII, 126.

21. Marguerite de Valois, *Mémoires*, p. 78 (vol. 37 de la *Collection des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*; édités par Petitot, Paris, 1823).

22. Branthôme, *op. cit.*, X, 306.

23. *Ibid.*, VI, 267.

24. *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

25. Louis Batiffol, *Le Roi Louis XIII à vingt ans*, Paris, s.d.

26. Par exemple, dans les *Mémoires* de Marguerite de Valois, *op. cit.*, p. 36, le récit du duc d'Anjou, le futur Henri III, en 1569, au Plessis lès-Tours, devant le roi et "la fleur des princes et seigneurs de France . . ." et son propre récit à la cour, à Saint-Denis, après son voyage à Liège. Dans Branthôme, VI, 255 ss., cf. le récit du siège de Malthe fait à la cour, au Plessis, par le commandeur de La Roche; et celui de la bataille de Dreux (1562), fait à Blois, à la Reine-Mère, par François de Guise.

27. Typiques à ce sujet sont les *Mémoires* de Marguerite de Valois, écrits en quelques jours pour Branthôme, reflétant donc le style parlé, courant, de l'époque, et dont les moindres conversations sont de véritables "discours," fort bien faits du reste. Il est vrai que ce ne sont que rois et princes qui parlent.

qualité disparue, sans la compréhension de laquelle il est difficile d'apprécier notre tragédie classique, et que D'Argenson²⁸ appelait fort proprement "la patience d'écouter." Mais, pour nous en tenir au seul confident, n'y a-t-il pas lieu de conclure qu'il est injuste de lui faire porter tout le poids des critiques qui lui ont été adressées depuis le milieu du XVIII^e siècle? Le discrédit où il est tombé tient sans doute pour une bonne part à la transformation des conditions économiques et sociales, et surtout au traitement maladroit dont il a été l'objet de la part des auteurs. Il reste qu'on le trouve dans les écrits d'auteurs de la fin du XVI^e siècle,²⁹ d'auteurs dont le seul but était de saisir et dépeindre la vie sur le vif: en sorte qu'il semble prouvé que ce "confident" de la tragédie classique n'est pas une "utilité," mais bel et bien une réalité vivante.

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28. *Mémoires*, édition Elzévirienne, v, 168.

29. Pour mémoire, rappelons les dates des auteurs cités: Lanoue: 1531-1591; Branthôme: 1535-1614; De l'Estoile: 1546-1611; Marguerite de Valois: 1552-1615; D'Aubigné: 1552-1630; Tavannes: 1555-1630 (son père, 1500-1573); D'Argenson: 1604-1757; Le Duchat: 1658-1735; Martin du Bellay: 1492-1561, *Mémoires* publiés en 1582.

TWELVE NEW LETTERS OF VOLTAIRE TO GABRIEL CRAMER

TWENTY LETTERS of Voltaire to his Genevan publishers, Gabriel and Philibert Cramer, of which one is addressed to Mme Gabriel Cramer, appear in the basic Moland edition of the Correspondence.¹ Seventy-two more letters and brief notes to Gabriel Cramer had been previously published by Claude Marie in *Le Nain jaune*² in 1863, but were overlooked by Moland. Fourteen of these had been printed also by Eugène Piot in the *Cabinet de l'amateur* during the same year. Bengesco, in 1889, reproduced sixteen of these letters to Cramer in his *Voltaire: Bibliographie de ses œuvres*,³ ten from the *Nain jaune* and six from the *Cabinet de l'amateur*. Five other unpublished letters, or extracts of letters, of Voltaire to Cramer were given to the public by Perey and Maugras in *La Vie intime de Voltaire*⁴ in 1885.

In 1930, at Geneva, the present M. Philibert Cramer graciously allowed me to read the proofs of some 150 letters of Voltaire to Cramer which he and M. Fernand Caussy were to have published in the *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France*. These proofs bore the dates "23 et 24 juillet 1914." The war evidently interrupted this publication of the letters, which was not resumed later.

In 1939 Professor Francis J. Crowley added over 100 items to the Voltaire-Cramer correspondence by publication in this very review⁵ of the Saint-Fargeau manuscripts at the Bibliothèque de la Ville de Paris.⁶

1. The eighteen volumes of the *Correspondance* in Moland date from 1880 to 1882. The supplementary volumes of Tables, which also contain some letters, were published in 1885. Following are the numbers of Voltaire-Cramer letters: Nos. 2915, 3081, 3085, 3144, 4347, 4424, 5265, 6708 (to Mme Cramer), 7377, 7529, 7844, 8319, 8332, 8362, 8375, 9632, 10267 (*Supplément à la Corr.*, Moland, I), 10268, 10269, Appendice No. 31 (Moland, II).

2. Bengesco, by mistake, indicates only "vingt-quatre billets inédits" instead of seventy-two (*Bibliographie*, III, 256). The error is explained by the fact that he mentions numbers of *Le Nain jaune* for July 18 and Aug. 1 (1863) only. Forty-eight letters had appeared in the numbers of July 1, and July 11. In the copy at the Bibliothèque Nationale, pp. 4-5 are bound out of place and are inserted in the number for Aug. 1, which accounts probably for Bengesco's oversight.

3. III, 304-316.

4. Pages 81, 242, 243, 348, 426. Cf. Bengesco, *op. cit.*, III, 276-277, 373.

5. Cf. *RR*, XXX (1939), 39-51, 133-150.

6. At least one of the items in the Caussy-Cramer proofs appears in Professor Crowley's publication of the letters: No. VIII (*RR*, XXX, 47). Caussy dated the letter, without giving definite evidence: "mars 1756." He reads "nos habitants," where Crowley's reading is

The twelve letters, plus one inclosure, of Voltaire to Cramer, which are now published in this article, do not appear in any of the places above-listed. They are copied from the MSS Coindet in the Bibliothèque publique et universitaire de Genève.⁷ In editing them, I have been able to profit also from the tentative, but nevertheless valuable manuscript notes on some phases of Voltaire's correspondence left by Théophile Dufour in the Archives de Genève. It is only justice that tribute should be paid to his industrious and intelligent scholarship, so tragically uncompleted during his life time.

It will be seen that the following letters, most of them of some length and several written originally in Voltaire's own hand, are of considerable interest, particularly those which bear upon the revision and the publication of the famous *Poème sur le Désastre de Lisbonne* (1756). Others furnish additional information on Voltaire's literary or publishing activities during the latter part of his career. Only two or three of the letters are relatively insignificant, though still having human interest.

In view of the detailed account of the Cramer family given by Professor Crowley in this same review, no further information, except what may be called forth by annotation of the letters themselves, is needed here.

I

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[One p. in-8 of 13 lines in the hand of a secretary except the last six words and the initialed signature, which are by Voltaire himself. MSS Coindet, MSS Suppl. 1037, f. 6.]

aux Délices 4 Dec.^{bre} [1755]

On me presse extremement, Monsieur, pour
l'œuvre du Seigneur.⁸ J'ai la fièvre, et je ne
veux point mourir sans avoir satisfait mon
zèle. Prenez cela, si vous voulez, pour un
transport au cerveau; mais je vous demande
en grace de vouloir bien me dire si vous avez
donné à un imprimeur l'oraison funèbre

"vos." Professor Crowley informs me that several others of the Caussy-Cramer letters have been published in the two *RR* articles. For several valuable suggestions in connection with the editing of the following letters, I am indebted to the careful reading of this article in MS by Professor Norman L. Torrey.

7. MSS Coindet, MSS Suppl. 1037, ff. 1-20.

8. An indication of the keen interest already aroused among Voltaire's friends by the forthcoming *Poème sur le Désastre de Lisbonne* (1756), a draft of which was evidently composed as soon as the end of November or the first days of December 1755.

de Lisbonne,⁹ et encor à quel imprimeur. Si
vous n'en avez point trouvé, ayez la bonté
de me renvoyer le sermon;¹⁰ je trouverai
pratique sur le champ. Pardonnez-moi mes
saintes importunités

le malade vous embrasse sans cérémonie

V

II

A Messieurs Messieurs les frères Cramer
a Genève

[Original autograph. Fragment of a seal in red wax with armorial bearings.
2½ pp. in-4. Ff. 18-19.]

a monrion 14. [février? 1756]¹¹

nous nous sommes trop pressez freres tres chers.
vous avez voulu imprimer lisbonne. j ay eu la
faiblesse de vous donner un ouvrage imparfait.
les copies qui ont couru ont révolté malgré le
beau mot d'esperer que vous avez sagement mis
a la fin.¹² mais ce qui me révolte, moy, cest que la piece

9. The earthquake at Lisbon occurred November 1, 1755. The first news of the disaster reached Geneva via Paris November 23 (Du Pan to Mme Freudenreich, MSS Du Pan, v, f. 32 and verso, Bibl. de Genève). Voltaire is entirely preoccupied by the catastrophe in his letter of Nov. 24 to the banker Tronchin at Lyons. (Moland, xxxviii, 511.) A letter to the Cramer brothers of Dec. 16, 1755, was formerly thought to be the first to refer to the printing of the poem. (*Ibid.*, p. 522. Cf. Georges Ascoli, *Voltaire: Poèmes philosophiques*, mimeographed ed., Paris, Centre de Documentation universitaire, Fascicule v, p. 183.) The above letter is twelve days earlier, showing that Voltaire's poem was dashed off at white heat under the impetus of the first news of the disaster.

10. In mockery of sermons preached by some of the pastors of Geneva in the effort to reconcile the earthquake with the doctrine of Providence, Voltaire often referred to his poem on Lisbon as a "sermon." (Cf. Moland, xxxviii, 531; xxxix, 26, etc.)

11. On Dec. 10, 1755, Voltaire's letters are headed "Aux Délices." The next letter in Moland, that of Dec. 16, is written from Monrion (Moland, xxxviii, 520-521). Through the winter of 1755-1756, until after the end of February, Voltaire continues to be at Monrion (*Ibid.*, pp. 520-558). On March 7, 1756, he again writes from Les Délices (*Ibid.*, xxxix, 2). Likewise, on March 9, 10, and 12 (*Ibid.*, pp. 3, 4, 5). But on March 17, we find another letter from Monrion (*Ibid.*, p. 5). The above letter could, therefore, conceivably be dated December 1755, January, February, or March 1756. But December 1755 is clearly too early in view of Voltaire's letter of December 16, in which he is still uncertain whether the Cramer brothers had yet printed his "sermon" (*Ibid.*, xxxviii, 522). January likewise offers little time for the circulation of his poem and the criticisms by the public mentioned in the above letter. Moreover, the additions to the poem given by Voltaire in this letter correspond with those indicated by M. Ascoli as appearing for the first time in the edition he calls G, published "au début de mars" (G. Ascoli, *op. cit.*, pp. 186, 189, 194-195). Thus the correct date appears to be February 14, 1756.

12. The possible rôle of Cramer in lending a more optimistic note to the conclusion is interesting and important. Cf. also Voltaire's letter to Pastor Bertrand of Feb. 28,

nest digne ny de votre presse, ny du public, ny du
 sujet, ny de lillustre pope que je combats et que je
 respecte.¹³ jamais je nay été plus pénétré de mon
 insuffisance. je fais ce que je peux, et mes efforts
 sont faibles
 je voudrais apres ces [sic] vers
*sans former des volcans*¹⁴ allumez sous nos pas [line 48]¹⁵
 je voudrais mettre
borneriez vous ainsi la supreme puissance [lines 49-52]
luy deffendriez vous d'exercer sa clemence?
P'eternel artisan n'a t'il pas dans ses mains
*des moyens infinis ainsi que ses desseins?*¹⁶
 je voudrais apres ce vers
il nest pas orgueilleux, helas il est sensible [line 58]
les tristes habitans de ces bords désolés [lines 59-82]
dans l horreur des tourments seraient ils consolez
si quelquun leur disait; "tombez, mourez tranquiles
"pour le bonheur du monde on détruit vos aziles
"d'autres mains batiront¹⁷ vos palais embrasez
"d'autres peuples naitront dans vos murs ecrazez
"le nord va s'enrichir de vos pertes fatales.
"tous vos maux sont un bien dans les loix generales.
"Dieu vous voit du meme œuil que les vils vermissaux
"dont vous serez la proye au fonds de vos tombeaux.

1756 (Moland, xxxviii, 556), where the word "espérer," already printed, perhaps even suggested by Cramer, appears to be definitely accepted by Voltaire, just as it does in the letter above. Another interesting bit of information in connection with the general tone of the poem comes from Dr. Tronchin, who wrote to Rousseau on September 1, 1756: "Lorsqu'il [Voltaire] eut fait son Poème [sur le Désastre de Lisbonne] je le conjurai de le brûler; nos amis communs se réunirent pour obtenir la même grâce; tout ce qu'on put gagner sur lui fut de l'adoucir; vous verrez la différence en comparant le second Poème au premier. Notre ami de Gauffecourt a été témoin de la scène, à ce qu'on m'a dit depuis" (Rousseau, *Correspondance générale*, Colin, II (1924), 327). If Tronchin is right, it was, then, in response to general urging from his Swiss friends that Voltaire made his poem less provocative.

13. For the objections of "quelques Suisses" to Voltaire's setting himself in opposition to Pope's Optimism, see a letter of Colini to Dupont of March 20 (Moland, xxxix, 10). Cf. the preceding note on the rôle of Dr. Tronchin and other Swiss friends. On March 22, Voltaire wrote to d'Argental: "Je suis fâché d'attaquer mon ami Pope, mais, c'est en l'admirant" (*Ibid.*, p. 13).

14. Du Pan wrote to Mme Freudenreich Nov. 23-24, 1755: "Pour comble de malheur la ville étoit toute en feu, on ne sait s'il s'y est ouvert un volcan, ou si le feu des cheminées a causé l'incendie" (MSS Du Pan, v, 32). A few days later, however, on the 27th, Du Pan wrote: "La ville [de Lisbonne] a été embrasée, non par un volcan, on n'en parle plus."

15. Moland, ix, 471. For greater clarity, I have taken the liberty of italicizing Voltaire's quotations from his poem in this and the next letter.

16. Moland reads: "tout prêts pour ses desseins?"

17. Moland: "vont bâtir."

*a¹⁸ des infortunez quel horrible langage!
 cruels a mes douleurs n'ajoutez point l'outrage.
 non ne me présentez plus a mon cœur agité¹⁹
 ces immuables loix de la nécessité,
 cette chaine des corps des esprits et des mondes,
 o rêves de²⁰ savants o chimeres profondes
 Dieu tient en main la chaine, et n'est point enchainé.
 par son choix bienfaisant²¹ tout est déterminé.
 il est libre, il est juste, il nest point implacable.
 pourquoi donc souffrons nous sous un maître équitable?
 vous ne répondez point a ce cri des douleurs.²²
 en vain du nom de bien vous nommez nos²³ malheurs
 ce n est pas les guérir. et Dieu seul peut le faire
 il frappe ses enfans; mais il les frappe en pere
 etc*

il y a encor beaucoup d'autres endroits quil faut
 eclaircir et tacher d'embellir. il faut joindre les
 preuves²⁴ a la poesie. on a besoin encor d'une
 preface raisonnée.²⁵ le tout peut composer un
 ouvrage interessant quon pourrait imprimer
 séparément et qui peutetre servirait a faire
 desirer le recueil [*sic*] entier des œuvres.²⁶ jay en
 vûe votre interest. il ny aurait qu'a sacrifier
 la demi feuille du poeme de lisbonne. je
 vous prie de permettre que jen paye les frais.
 montrez cette lettre a monsieur tronchin
 boissier²⁷ et prenons ses conseils. je vous
 embrasse du meilleur de mon cœur

V

18. First draft scratched out: "Pour."

19. This thirteen-syllable line is corrected in Moland by the omission of "me."

20. Moland: "des."

21. First draft: "Au gré de ses bontez."

22. These last four lines have been completely changed in Moland.

23. First draft: "mes."

24. Voltaire is already thinking of the "Notes" to be added to his text in explanation of his philosophy (cf. Moland, XXXIX, 17, 21).

25. A first proposal of the extensive Preface with its discussion of the Optimism of Pope, Leibnitz, Shaftesbury, and Bolingbroke (cf. Moland, XXXIX, 21). This Preface first appeared in early March (cf. G. Ascoli, *op. cit.*, pp. 186, 190).

26. This is the projected *Collection complète des Œuvres de M. de Voltaire. Première édition*, published by Cramer in 1756, 17 vols. in-8 (Bengesco, No. 2133, IV, 50 ff.).

27. Probably the Conseiller François Tronchin (1704-1798), who welcomed Voltaire on his arrival in Geneva in 1754 and was long on intimate terms with him (cf. Henry Tronchin, *Le Conseiller François Tronchin et ses amis*, Paris, 1895, pp. 13 ff.). Elsewhere Voltaire refers to a "M. Tronchin Calandrin," or "Calandrin" (Moland, XLIII, 364; XLIV, 106), the Tronchin family having married into the Italian family of Calandrin

IIa

[Loose sheet of paper in Voltaire's hand, probably originally inclosed with a letter. No date. F. 20.]

[Après le 7 mars? 1756]²⁸

poeme sur lisbonne

après ce vers
sans pouvoir un moment nous voir et nous connaître [line 206]
quelquefois²⁹ dans nos jours consacrez aux douleurs [line 211]
par la main du plaisir nous essuions nos pleurs.
mais le plaisir s'envole et passe comme une ombre.
nos chagrins nos regrets nos pertes sont sans nombre.
le passé n'est pour nous qu'un triste souvenir;
le présent est affreux, s'il n'est point d'avenir:
si la nuit du tombeau détruit l'être qui pense.
un jour tout sera bien voila mon³⁰ esperance.
tout est bien aujourd'hui, voila lillusion.
les sages me trompaient, et dieu seul a raison
humble dans mes soupirs soumis dans ma soufrance
je n'interroge point la supreme puissance.³¹
sur un ton moins lugubre on me vit autrefois
chanter de nos plaisirs³² les séduisantes loix.
instruit par les douleurs³³ instruit par la vieillesse
des malheureux humains déplorant la faiblesse³⁴
mon cœur compatissant gémit sans murmurer
sans accuser le Dieu que je dois implorer³⁵

(cf. Henry Tronchin, *Théodore Tronchin*, Paris, 1906, pp. 1-2). It seems probable therefore that Voltaire is using the name Boissier here in similar fashion to identify one of the members of the numerous Tronchin family. A Jean-Isaac Boissier appears in the deed of sale of Les Délices as owning property to the west of that acquired by Voltaire (Archives d'Etat de Genève). A certain wealthy M. Boissier of Geneva is mentioned by Voltaire as having drowned himself in 1766 because of ill health (Moland, XLIV, 468-469).

28. On March 7, 1756, Voltaire wrote to Pastor Bertrand inclosing part of this same passage (Moland, XXXIX, 2-3). In the letter to Bertrand, however, the earlier version of line 211 ("Je sens que," or "Je sais que") still subsists. The present manuscript with the correction "quelquefois," should therefore be subsequent to March 7, since the earlier version here appears, stricken out. On March 12 a copy of these same verses was sent to Thieriot in Paris, but the text is not reproduced by Moland. Voltaire wrote: "Si vous aimez les vers honnêtes et décents, voici ceux qui termineront le *sermon* sur Lisbonne; lâchez-les pour apaiser les cerbères" (Moland, XXXIX, 5).

29. The first version, stricken out, read: "Je sens que," or, "Je sais que." Between the present line 206 and line 211, Voltaire later added four verses (cf. Moland, IX, 477-478).

30. Moland: "notre."

31. Moland: "Je ne m'élève point contre la Providence."

32. Moland: "Chanter des doux plaisirs."

33. Moland: "D'autres temps, d'autres mœurs."

34. Moland: "Des humains égarés partageant la faiblesse."

35. This was then the last line of the poem (cf. Moland, IX, 480). In the Moland

III

A Monsieur Monsieur Gabriel Cramer [sic]

[One p. in-8. Autogr. Traces of sealing wax. No date or signature. Ff. 1-2.]

[Premiers jours de mars 1759]³⁶

je vais travailler a fernex³⁷ aux sujets
de Gravelot:³⁸ mais aprenez mon cher
gabriel que le libraire granger³⁹ a l'agrement
de M^r de malzerbes⁴⁰ pour une nouvelle
edition et qu'il fait des estampes quil
pretend admirables. je crois quil faudrait
pour votre avantage vous entendre avec
granger et qu'il se chargeat de votre
nouvelle édition. il ny a service que
je ne sois prest a vous rendre
on a fait cinq editions de candide
a paris.⁴¹ et a la fin on l'a deffendu.⁴²

edition, the last two lines of this passage, but no longer of the poem, read:

"Dans une épaisse nuit cherchant à m'éclairer,

Je ne sais que souffrir, et non pas murmurer."

36. "Le 2 mars 1759," says M. Morize, "*Candide* est condamné par le Conseil de Genève,—ce qui date approximativement l'édition de Cramer du milieu de février. Celles de Paris doivent être à peu près contemporaines" (Voltaire, *Candide*, crit. ed. by André Morize, Paris, 1913, p. x). The complaint of Omer, "l'avocat général," to his brother, "le Procureur général," about the circulation of *Candide* in Paris is dated: "Ecrit le 24 février 1759" (*Ibid.*, pp. x-xi). "Le lendemain, 25 février, on saisissait chez l'imprimeur Grangé les premières feuilles d'une édition de *Candide* faite pour le libraire Duchesne, et non pas sur une copie manuscrite, mais d'après des feuilles imprimées" (*Ibid.*, p. xi).

37. A letter of Voltaire in Moland of Jan. 3, 1759, is dated from Ferney. After that, his letters are dated either "aux Délices," or Tournay, except on Feb. 8 and May 5, when two separate letters appear with the address, Ferney. He may of course have intended to go to Ferney and changed his plans.

38. Hubert-François Bourguignon Gravelot was born and died in Paris (1699-1773). Gravelot drew the illustrations for Voltaire's publication of the *Théâtre de Pierre Corneille*, 1764 (Bengesco, II, 132-133). In this letter, Cramer appears to have proposed a new edition of Voltaire's works. Gravelot had already drawn some illustrations for *Rome sauvée* and *Le Duc de Foix* in the edition of Voltaire's works published by Lambert in 1757, Vol. v (Bengesco, IV, 64, and note). A letter of Gravelot to Cramer thanking him for the honor of being chosen to illustrate this new edition is given by the Goncourt Brothers, *L'Art du XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Charpentier, 3 vols., 1906, II, 283-284. This edition of Voltaire was finally published beginning with 1768 (Bengesco, IV, 73).

39. Grangé or Granger, book publisher in Paris, several times mentioned by Voltaire (cf. Moland, VI, 338; XLI, 334; XLII, 518).

40. Chrétien-Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes (1721-1794), "Directeur de la Librairie" from December 1750 to 1763, friendly to the free movement of ideas.

41. According to Morize (*op. cit.*, p. xi), there were at least thirteen editions of *Candide* in the year 1759 alone. How much time elapsed before five editions appeared at Paris we do not know. Voltaire, in another unpublished letter, wrote to Gabriel Cramer: "Il s'est vendu six milles *Candides*." Caussy dated this letter, "20 févr. 1759,"

aussitôt on a commencé la sixieme
l epilogue de l'ode⁴³ fera beau bruit
ne manquez pas d envoyer un expres
avec l'epreuve. il faudra peut etre
emmieller quelques endroits. jay
peur d avoir trop vinaigré la salade

IV

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[One page in-8, 17 lines, in Voltaire's hand. No place, date, or address. Ff. 7-8.]

[Ferney, samedi 3 ou 10 janvier, ou
bien dimanche 4 ou 11, 1761]⁴⁴

nos pretres sont fort au dessus des
votres, mon cher Gabriel, ils assassinent
la cause du pauvre de croze qui
est mourant l'a emporté sur tancrede⁴⁵
et sur jeanne.⁴⁶ imprimez je vous
prie sans délai la requete du
pere de ce jeune homme assassiné
par son curé.⁴⁷ elle servira du moins
a confondre la justice de Gex, si
elle ne vange⁴⁸ pas ce meurtre.

but without giving evidence for such a very early date (Caussy-Cramer proofs; cf. *supra*, p. 341).

42. Unbound sheets of *Candide*, as we have already noted, were seized from Grangé on Feb. 25 (cf. *supra*, note 36).

43. Voltaire had sent his *Ode sur la mort de la Princesse de Bareith* to Frederick on Feb. 4, 1759 (Moland, VIII, 462, n.). "L'Epilogue" refers to the long note in prose, "Note de M. Morza," which follows the *Ode* and which went through several versions. In it Voltaire attacked the *Journal de Trévoux*, Berthier, the Jesuits, and other enemies whom he considered hostile to that freedom of thought which he said had been so beneficial to England and whose absence he held to be the cause of the degradation of Italy and of the comparative lack of progress in France. Hence the reference to the "beau bruit."

44. The first mention of the case of Decroze appears in Voltaire's letter to Fyot de La Marche of Jan. 3, 1761 (Moland, XLI, 135. For numerous other references, see Moland, *Table*, under the name of *Ancian*). Voltaire wrote to Cramer on the same subject later in the month, but without giving the exact date (Moland, XLI, 157-158).

45. *Tancrede* was published in 1761 (Bengesco, I, 58).

46. Two editions of *La Pucelle*, with the rubric "Londres," appeared in 1761 (Bengesco, I, 130, 131).

47. The younger Decroze was attacked, it was alleged, on Sunday, Dec. 28, 1760, at the instigation of the Curé Ancian, of Moëns. Cf. the petition addressed *A Monsieur le Lieutenant Criminel du pays de Gex* (Moland, XXIV, 161-164, dated Jan. 3, 1761, with an addition dated Jan. 10, 1761. Cf. also Bengesco, II, 90). This letter shows almost conclusively that Voltaire was author of the petition issued in the name of the father of Decroze.

48. *Vange* or *venge*.

je vous demande en grace de
ne pas perdre un moment. le st. jour
du dimanche doit etre employé
a dresser une requete contre ceux
qui ont commis un assassinat le
dimanche. unissez⁴⁹ vous a moy
contre les crimes des prêtres

V

V

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 10 lines, one p. in-8, written by a secretary. No signature or address.
Ff. 3-4.]

[Commencement de 1763?]⁵⁰

J'envoie à mon cher gabriel, cette quittance
de 600.^l p.^r les inutiles estampes du président
de la marche; je le prie de mettre cette
quittance dans son greffe. on demande
à Lyon, quel est le libraire qui reçoit les
souscriptions;⁵¹ il me semble qu'il faudrait
rafraichir la mémoire du public, et qu'il ne
serait pas mal de donner tous les mois les noms
des personnes chez qui l'on souscrit.

Mad.^e Constant se meurt.⁵² cela serre le cœur.

49. Voltaire crossed out *à* after *unissez* having no doubt at first been preoccupied with the *à* which was to come in the phrase "à moy."

50. In letters to the Président de La Marche of Sept. 14 and Oct. 8, 1761, Voltaire arranged to employ François de Vosges père to design some of the engravings for his edition of Corneille (Moland, *XL*, 441, 471). Letters to de Vosges, of June and July, probably of the following year, add details of the subjects selected and the progress of the work (Moland, *XLII*, 132, 151, 161). On Dec. 18, 1762 (*Ibid.*, p. 305), however, Voltaire writes to La Marche that there are serious criticisms in Paris of de Vosges's work and complaints from the subscribers. Ultimately de Vosges's work was abandoned and all the figures were designed by Gravelot except the Frontispiece. The above letter giving up the drawings of de Vosges père would seem therefore to date from shortly after the letter of Dec. 18, 1762, to La Marche. Bengesco thinks Beuchot was right in dating Voltaire's letters to de Vosges 1761 rather than 1762 as Moland has done (Bengesco, *II*, 134, n. 2). However, the letter to La Marche of Sept. 14, 1761, appears to be correctly classified by the visit of the latter to Ferney mentioned in the letter. The letters to de Vosges père could hardly precede this letter which seems to bear the first proposal of the matter. Two of the letters to de Vosges are dated "juin" and "3 juillet," which must therefore be the following year, 1762 (Cf. also F. J. Crowley, *RR*, *XXX*, 135, note 117).

51. Subscriptions for the edition of Corneille (Bengesco, *III*, 306).

52. Mme Charlotte Constant, née Pictet, and the daughter of Voltaire's neighbor at Les Délices, died March 25, 1766. The present letter must therefore refer only to a serious illness, which aroused grave anxiety.

VI

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 10 lines plus the date. Original in the hand of a secretary. One p. in-8 without place, address, signature, or year. F. 12.]

[Ferney, 9 août 1764?]⁵³

Eh bien, envoyez moi, je vous en prie, deux ou trois exemplaires⁵⁴ de ce que vous avez. on a dépareillé l'exemplaire de mad.^e Denis, et deux autres qui me restent. on m'en demande, et même avec assez d'indiscretion, je ne puis toujours refuser. ne me refusez pas, je vous serai très obligé.

Bon soir mon cher voisin.

9.^e auguste. [1764?]

VII

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 7 lines in the hand of a secretary. One p. in-8. No place or date (except "Lundy"). No address or signature. Ff. 10-11.]

[1767?]⁵⁵

Nous ne pumes pas aller hier à Tournay⁵⁶ voir la joue et le pied enflés. nous esperons y aller aujourd'hui. nous envoyons savoir comment se portent les deux malades. j'ai bien des choses à dire à Monsieur Caro.⁵⁷

Lundy

53. Under the same date of the "9 auguste" 1764, Voltaire writes to Damilaville: "S'il vous restait quelques exemplaires de *Corneille*, je vous supplerais d'en faire tenir un à M. le marquis Albergati" (Moland, XLII, 296). The following day, Voltaire writes to Albergati himself: "Croyez-vous, monsieur, que j'ai eu toutes les peines du monde à trouver dans Paris un exemplaire du nouveau *Corneille commenté*? Il n'y en a plus à Genève; les libraires n'en avaient point assez imprimé" (*Ibid.*, XLIII, 297). The juxtaposition of these letters and dates makes 1764 seem probable for this letter.

54. Probably the *Commentaire sur Corneille* (1764), mentioned in the preceding note.

55. On Sept. 4, 1767, Voltaire writes to D'Alembert: "Gabriel Cramer donne de grands soupers dans le petit castel de Tournay, que je lui ai abandonné" (Moland, XLV, 364). On Sept. 30, 1767, Voltaire writes to the same correspondent: "Gabriel Cramer . . . donne de bons soupers dans mon château de Tournay, que je lui ai prêté" (*Ibid.*, p. 389). This suggests, but without certainty, that the above letter may date from 1767.

56. See the preceding note.

57. Voltaire often addressed Gabriel as "Caro Gabriele" or, as here, "Monsieur Caro."

VIII

[A. M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 7 lines in the hand of a secretary. One p. in-8. No place, date, address, or signature. F. 9.]

[1767?]⁵⁸

Toute la maison de ferney envoie
savoir des nouvelles de la santé
de Madame Cramer.

Monsieur Cramer est supplié
d'avoir égard à la requête qu'on
lui a présentée sur les
montagnes.⁵⁹

IX

[A. M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 13 lines, one p. in-8, in the hand of a secretary. No date, address, or signature. F. 5.]

[1768]⁶⁰

J'ai envoyé hier à M.^r Cramer de quoi continuer
l'édition de son 3.^e volume.⁶¹

Quant à l'in 4.^e je le prie de me faire
savoir s'il a commencé l'histoire de Charles
12. il y a un morceau intéressant⁶² qu'il
faut y ajouter; il conviendrait que cette
pièce fut mise au devant de l'histoire,
mais si l'ouvrage est commencé, on la
placera à la fin. elle n'est pas tout à
fait en état, mais celà ne demande
qu'un jour de travail.

58. Does this letter also, like the preceding, date from the installation of the Cramer family at Tournay?

59. In the *Singularités de la nature* (1768) are two chapters entitled: *Des Montagnes, de leur nécessité, et des causes finales*, and *De la formation des montagnes*. They relate to the finding of shells in the Alps and Voltaire's quarrel with Buffon over the interpretation to be given to this discovery of fossils. Is Voltaire perhaps referring to this incident here?

60. In the quarto edition of the *Œuvres de Voltaire*, published by Cramer, the *Histoire de Charles XII* forms part of Vol. VII. Volumes I-VII of this edition appeared in 1768 (Bengesco, IV, 74).

61. What is this third volume? It can hardly be part of the quarto edition referred to in the next sentence, since Voltaire makes a distinction between them. Could it be the *Nouveaux Mélanges philosophiques, historiques, critiques*, etc., published by Cramer in 19 volumes from 1765 to 1776? (Bengesco, n° 2212).

62. The *Avis important sur l'Histoire de Charles XII* (1768) (cf. Moland, XVI, 142-143). This contained the testimony of Stanislas, former King of Poland, to the truth of Voltaire's History.

Je l'avais prié de me faire avoir un
grégoire de Tours de la bibliothèque.

X

a Messieurs messieurs Crammer [sic]

[Original in Voltaire's hand. One p. in-4. 8 lines plus the date. Ff. 14-15.]

[Ferney, le 8 sept. 1770]⁶³

Monsieur le procureur⁶⁴ General de besançon
qui a diné chez moy, qui est a geneve pour
un moment et qui part p^r bezancon, voudrait
mon cher Gabriele⁶⁵ avoir un exemplaire
de mes œuvres. vous me feriez un grand plaisir
d en donner un a son domestique, si vous en
avez et si cela ne vous gene point. je vous
embrasse de tout mon cœur

8 sept^b [1770]

V

XI

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[2½ pp. in-4. In the hand of a secretary except the closing sentence and signature which are by Voltaire. No address. Ff. 16-17.]

à ferney 15.^e 8.^{bre} 1771.⁶⁶

Je vois, Monsieur, par votre Lettre du 10.^e 8.^{bre} que c'est de vos associés de Bâle que j'ai beaucoup à me plaindre. Nonseulement le volume auquel le titre manque, et qui commence par les singularités de la nature,⁶⁷ est plein de fautes absurdes; nonseulement on a eu l'inadvertence étonnante de répéter mot pour mot aux pages 166 et suivantes ce qui se trouve à la page

63. In a letter to the Duc de Choiseul of Sept. 7, 1770, Voltaire writes: "Le procureur général de Besançon est dans des principes tout à fait opposés aux vôtres, quand il s'agit de faire du bien" (Moland, XLVII, 193). Evidently Voltaire had just received the visit from the *Procureur général*. The correspondence in dates (the above letter being written the day after) permits dating this letter exactly. Voltaire several times speaks unfavorably of the *Procureur général* de Besançon, whom Beuchot calls Doroz (Moland, XLVII, 193, n.; XLIV, 430, 438).

64. Voltaire had scratched out something, probably *de*, thinking too soon of the *de* to come before *Besançon*.

65. Although the letter is addressed: "A Messieurs Cramer," this is merely the firm name. Philibert Cramer (1727-1779) had abandoned the printing business in the early 60s. (Cf. F. J. Crowley, *RR*, xxx, 41). Thus Voltaire is really writing, as usual, to Gabriel.

66. This letter continues the protests voiced by Voltaire in letters to Cramer of the end of June, of July 11, Sept. 10, and Sept. 26, 1771 (Moland, XLVII, 464, 477, 505, and 516-517). This is the only letter, of those reproduced here, in which there seemed no point in following the original lines exactly as in the MS.

67. *Les Singularités de la nature*, dated 1768, appeared first at the beginning of 1769 (Bengesco, II, 228). Volume XVII of the *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, published by Cramer from 1768 on, came out in 1771 (*Ibid.*, IV, 75).

157 et suivantes; nonseulement on a commis d'autres fautes très graves, mais on a eu la cruauté d'insérer dans ce volume plusieurs pièces qu'on sait très bien n'être point de moi, et dont les auteurs sont assez connus.

Le dix septieme volume est bien plus inexcusable, on y trouve les *Evangelies apocryphes* de *fabricius*,⁶⁸ traduits par le s^r Bigex,⁶⁹ et d'autres pièces qui ne peuvent être avouées par personne.

Certainement on n'aurait point défiguré ainsi cette édition in quarto si vous y aviez seul présidé. Vous n'auriez pas souffert qu'on m'eut fait un tel outrage dont vous même vous êtes la victime. vous m'auriez consulté, vous m'auriez envoyé toutes les feuilles; j'aurais pris la peine de les corriger; vous auriez fait une édition véritable et avouée de moi. ferney est si près de genève que vous auriez pu avoir cette complaisance, sans vous gêner le moins du monde, et sans faire perdre un seul moment à vos ouvriers.

J'ai lieu de croire que vous avez envoyé cette malheureuse édition à votre associé de Paris, mais il n'est pas possible que je l'avoue, et que je laisse subsister mon nom à la tête des volumes que vous m'avez envoyés. il est de nécessité absolue que votre associé de Paris supprime mon nom. c'est ce que mon neveu conseiller de grand-chambre⁷⁰ exigera fortement. c'est ce que je demanderai à M^r. De Sartine,⁷¹ et même à M. le Chancelier.⁷² mais alors il faudrait saisir toute l'édition, ce qui vous causerait une perte considérable, et je serais au désespoir de vous faire la moindre peine à vous et à votre associé.

J'ai donc tout lieu d'espérer qu'il ôtera mon nom de tous ces volumes dangereux, remplis d'ouvrages qui ne m'appartiennent point, et qu'il les débitera séparément et avec prudence.

Il conviendra aussi qu'il fasse imprimer un Errata qui est absolument nécessaire. les fautes sont trop grossieres et trop nombreuses. je pense que c'est la seule façon de réparer, s'il est possible, la faute incroyable qu'on a faite de m'imprimer sans me consulter en rien.

j ay lhonneur d etre bien sincèrement Monsieur⁷³

Votre tres humble et tres obeissant Serviteur

Voltaire

68. J.-A. Fabricius, editor of the *Codex apocryphus Novi Testamenti* (cf. Moland, xxvii, 439). Voltaire had in his library the second edition, published at Hamburg in 1719, 3 vols. bound in 4 vols. (cf. G. R. Havens and N. L. Torrey, "Voltaire's Books: A Selected List," *MP*, xxvii (1929), 10).

69. The Abbé Bigex, one of Voltaire's secretaries or copyists, assumed the paternity of several of his master's works or had them fathered upon him (cf. Moland, xxvii, 439). The *Collection des anciens évangiles* was in fact published in this same Volume xvii of the *Œuvres complètes* in 1771 (Bengesco, iv, 75).

70. Alexandre-Jean Mignot, abbé de Scellières, "conseiller-clerc au grand conseil" (Moland, xlii, 188, n. 2).

71. Antoine-Raymond-Jean-Gualbert-Gabriel de Sartine (1729-1801), *lieutenant-général de police* from 1759 to 1774.

72. René-Nicolas-Charles-Augustin de Maupeou (1714-1792), chancellor from 1768 to 1774 (cf. Moland, xvi, 107, n.; xlvii, 347, n. 4).

73. The extreme formality of the beginning and the closing salutation, as well as the tone of the letter as a whole, indicates that Voltaire was writing a disavowal with the intention of making it public if necessary.

XII

[A M. Gabriel Cramer]

[Note of 9 lines. One p. in-8 in the hand of a secretary. No place, date, address, or signature. F. 13.]

[Environ le 21 juin 1775]⁷⁴

Si Monsieur Cramer est revenu, je le prie
instamment de vouloir bien me faire avoir
au moins une demi douzaine de filles de
Minée.⁷⁵ on ne cesse de m'en demander à
Paris. Il est bien cruel de ne point
fournir de filles à ses amis. S'il n'y
en avait point, envérité il en faudrait
faire.⁷⁶ Monsieur Cramer est trop bon
serviteur des filles⁷⁷ pour me refuser.⁷⁸

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74. On June 21, 1775, Voltaire writes to M. de Vaines: "J'ai le cœur ulcéré, monsieur, de ne vous avoir présenté aucune des *Filles de Minée*. . . . Je viens d'écrire à Gabriel Cramer pour avoir des *Filles*; s'il n'en a point, il faut qu'il en fasse, et qu'il les imprime pour votre amusement" (Moland, XLIX, 313). The repetition in this letter to de Vaines of the phrases: "s'il n'en a point"; "il faut qu'il en fasse," plus the phrase: "Je viens d'écrire à Gabriel Cramer," dates the above letter as June 21, 1775, or thereabouts.

75. *Le Dimanche, ou les Filles de Minée*, conte en vers (1775). Bengesco appears to be wrong in saying: "Ce conte qui circulait en manuscrit en juin 1775, fut imprimé dans le courant du même mois" (Bengesco, I, 185). Already, on May 9, Mme du Deffant had written to Voltaire, praising *Les Filles de Minée* and asking him to send her a copy (Moland, XLIX, 302). Voltaire replied May 17: "Je quitte ma robe de médecin, pour vous parler des *Filles de Minée*. Je vous jure que je n'ai envoyé ces trois bavardes à personne. C'est une indiscretion de Cramer, dont je suis très-fâché. . . . J'envoie pour vous cette mauvaise plaisanterie de feu La Viscière à M. de Lisle. Elle ne lui coûtera rien. Elle vous coûterait un écu, et elle ne le vaut pas" (Moland, XLIX, 304). Hence this tale must have been printed by May 1775, since Cramer's "indiscretion" could only have concerned printed copies, not manuscripts.

76. Cf. note 74.

77. Voltaire wrote of Gabriel Cramer to D'Alembert Sept. 4, 1767: "C'est d'ailleurs un homme fort galant" (Moland, XLV, 364).

78. The present letter furnishes evidence that this edition of *Le Dimanche, ou les Filles de Minée*, with the rubric "Londres," was in reality printed at Geneva by Cramer.

CHATEAUBRIAND, REVITALIZER OF THE FRENCH CLASSICS

THE *Génie du Christianisme*, even supplemented by Chateaubriand's other writings, does not present a systematic and complete tableau of French literature in the seventeenth century. Nevertheless in his occasional rôle as a critic Chateaubriand gives us interesting and suggestive judgments on nearly all the seventeenth-century writers whom he finds time to mention. In these comments the critic is generally looking at literature from a certain angle and borrowing illustrations to prove a thesis, or else expressing personal preferences with little regard for theories and dogmas. A constant preoccupation is the desire to annihilate the whole eighteenth century of the *philosophes* and to link the "littérature nouvelle," of which he considers himself the prophet, with the seventeenth century—but with a seventeenth century as Chateaubriand himself conceives it, having qualities strongly resembling his own. As a result of this preoccupation, of which certain aspects only can be touched upon here,¹ there dates from the *Génie du Christianisme* a new and significant conception of the French classics.

This fact has been recognized, of course, by critics and literary historians from Sainte-Beuve and Vinet to Giraud, Moreau, and Gillot; yet little attempt has been made to analyze the originality and value of Chateaubriand's judgments on the individual writers of the age of Louis XIV. Nor has it been sufficiently emphasized that the nineteenth century and even the twentieth have viewed certain of the seventeenth-century masters, generally unwittingly, to some extent through the eyes of the author of the *Génie du Christianisme*. Yet Chateaubriand first perceived and pointed out in several leading figures qualities which have greatly impressed succeeding generations of readers and critics, so that he stands as a renewer or revitalizer of the French classics, the first to present them in their living and personal qualities after the dry and academic criticism of men like Voltaire, Marmontel, and La Harpe had all but drained them of their vital substance. Even though he pays lip-service to all the classical canons (except in the matter of the "merveilleux chrétien"), Chateaubriand seldom centers his attention on the most classical characteristics of the seventeenth-century masters;

1. In a forthcoming book on *Chateaubriand as a Critic and Historian of French Literature*, this whole question is treated in detail, both in relation to the history of criticism and for the light it throws upon Chateaubriand's intellectual biography.

instead, he shows his taste for the qualities which are his own—melancholy, lyrical sadness, harmonious eloquence, preoccupation with the eternal commonplaces which were to furnish the themes for countless romantic works. Neither his religious thesis nor his expressed allegiance to classical doctrines avails to make him devote himself with any fervor to writers who do not appeal to his own intimate sensibility. Five who do appeal—and they are five of the greatest masters—are given especially significant treatment by our critic, both for the originality and importance of his “discoveries” about their esthetic and human qualities and for the fortune of these discoveries with contemporary and later generations of critics and readers.

Thus for the revelation of the romantic, or pre-romantic, Pascal—early ancestor of the Renés and Obermanns of the nineteenth century—we are still in Chateaubriand's debt; or rather, as scholars who have sought to destroy this lyrical characterization in the interests of historical truth might insist, our conception of the author of the *Pensées* is still clouded over by the creation of Chateaubriand's poetic imagination. At any rate, though he recognized the vigor and loftiness of Pascal's moral, political, and religious ideas—reacting here against the “philosophical” criticism which the writer had suffered during the eighteenth century—Chateaubriand looked upon the great Jansenist primarily as the melancholy poet of man's nothingness before the infinite. With his acute feeling for man's dual nature—his “misère” and his “grandeur”—Pascal had been anathema to the Enlightenment. But for Chateaubriand his “tristesse” and “mélancolie”—the results of this dualism—did not constitute a fault, as Voltaire and Condorcet had held, but rather a quality which added immeasurably to the beauty and profound truth of his writings.² This was a new and significant view, which Chateaubriand expressed in such a way as to fix, for more than a century, the figure of a sort of Pascal-René which more exact literary historians have been unable fully to destroy.

Even before the *Génie du Christianisme*, Chateaubriand disputed Mme de Staël's theories on the origins of poetic melancholy by declaring that neither England nor Germany produced Pascal and Bossuet, “ces deux grands modèles de la mélancolie en sentiments et en pensées,”³ and by insisting that Pascal, rather than the English poet Young, was “l'homme de la douleur,” pleasing “aux cœurs véritablement malheu-

2. Cf. Paul Pierrot, “Chateaubriand et Pascal—l'influence des *Pensées* sur le *Génie du Christianisme*,” *Revue Générale* (Bruxelles), 62^e année (15 août 1929), pp. 137-138.

3. Lettre à Fontanes, 22 décembre 1800, in *Correspondance générale de Chateaubriand*, Paris, Champion, 1912-1924, I, 34.

reux."⁴ And in the *Génie* the critic vigorously denies Voltaire's charge that Pascal was "un fou sublime né un siècle trop tôt," to insist that the pages in which the author of the *Pensées* soars above the greatest geniuses would not even exist had their creator been an unbeliever, since they are concerned with the problem of man's fall.⁵ Still more significantly, he concludes that in such passages Pascal's feelings are remarkable over all for the "profondeur de leur tristesse" and for a certain "immensité" which makes the reader feel as if he were suspended "au milieu de ces sentiments comme dans l'infini."⁶

As Chateaubriand discovered a new Pascal and fixed for generations to come the image of this great genius as he conceived him, so he discovered a new Bossuet—neither the historian nor the eloquent defender of Catholic orthodoxy, already known to all, but the sublime lyric poet, who by his harmonious periods, his musical rhythms, his deep imaginative insight, and his concern with the poetic theme of man's fate and his relation to the infinite merits the title of "poet" even though his writings are cast in the freer molds of prose. This conception of the lyrical qualities of Bossuet's "oraisons funèbres"—perhaps the thing which has saved these works for literature instead of allowing them to sink into the limbo of other writings in their *genre*—is familiar to the modern reader because Villemain and especially Brunetière have insisted upon it, but at the time of the *Génie du Christianisme* it was a new and important contribution to the understanding of the true esthetic and human values of Bossuet's art.

Especially drawn to Bossuet because he saw in this writer qualities which he himself possessed as well as because the great Catholic orator seemed a powerful ally for one attempting to prove the superiority of the Christian masters of the seventeenth century over the ancient pagans and the irreligious *philosophes*, Chateaubriand discussed him at great length. Only his treatment of Bossuet's "oraisons funèbres" need concern us here, however, and that without regard for the religious implications but simply for its originality as literary criticism.

Chateaubriand points out qualities which earlier critics had overlooked or of which they had failed to grasp the significance. The mention of Bossuet, along with Pascal, as a model for the melancholy of the pre-romantics has already been cited. Later the critic affirms that

4. Article of 1801 on Young, in Chateaubriand, *Mélanges littéraires*. Vol. XXI of *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Ladvocat, 1826-1831, p. 42.

5. Cf. Pierrot, *loc. cit.*, p. 135.

6. *Génie du Christianisme*, III^e partie, livre II, chapitre 6, in *Œuvres*, XIII, 10.

7. *Ibid.*, III, II, 6, in *Œuvres*, XIII, 9.

Bossuet, though living amidst the pomp of Versailles, could still imbue his works with a "sainte et majestueuse tristesse" because he knew how to withdraw into the inspiring solitude of his religion.⁸ Constantly concerned with the tomb, bending over the "gouffres d'une autre vie," Bossuet fills the silent abysses of eternity with words of time and death, and "il se plonge, il se noie dans des mélancolies" incroyables, dans d'inconcevables douleurs."¹⁰ For the author of *René*, of course, this melancholy expressed in harmonious, rhythmic periods is an element of ineffable charm, and he insists upon it in such a way as to make all succeeding generations of readers fully conscious of it.

Other comments, often given in the form of little "explications de textes" on notable passages, show the rôle played by Bossuet's creative imagination in both the content and the style of the "oraisons funèbres." The critic insists upon his unique diction, in which often the simplest terms, the most commonplace expressions, combined with noble ideas and awesome images, serve—as in the Scriptures—to produce the most powerful and moving effects.¹¹

At last Chateaubriand finds the word to describe accurately Bossuet's genius in these superb compositions: he calls the author a "poet." Such an appellation does not startle the modern reader, who is well acquainted with the lyrical qualities of Bossuet's works. But at the time of the *Génie du Christianisme* this appreciation was original enough for the critic to feel it necessary to excuse himself for using the word poet.¹² After doing so, he compares Bossuet with David, and likens a passage from the oration on Anne de Gonzague to the *Book of Ruth*.¹³ Nor was Bossuet merely a lyric poet, he adds; at times, as in the oration on the Prince de Condé, he assumed the epic mode in true Homeric style.¹⁴

The author of the *Génie du Christianisme* made equally significant discoveries about several of the purely secular masters. With respect to Molière's genius, for example, he was the first to appreciate the "tristesse" or serious element. Gaiffe rightly observes that "le rire franc de Molière reste pour nous assombri par les commentaires de Rousseau et par près d'un siècle de déformation romantique."¹⁵ But Rousseau,

8. *Mélanges littéraires*, in *Œuvres*, XXI, 43.

9. After the first edition, Chateaubriand substituted "tristesses" for "mélancolies."

10. *Génie*, III, iv, 4, in *Œuvres*, XIII, 77-78.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

15. Félix Gaiffe, *Le Rire et la scène française*, Paris, Boivin, 1931, p. 10.

in the *Lettre à d'Alembert*, simply attacked Molière on moral grounds, especially for ridiculing the figure of Alceste with whom Jean-Jacques unconsciously identified himself; he did not express any *admiration* for the serious side of Molière's genius. During the period 1830-1850, as Mr. Fellows has shown,¹⁶ appreciation of the serious side of Molière's comedy became general, but before the romantic era it was virtually unknown. Yet in 1801, in his article on Shakespeare, Chateaubriand declares that while the tragic muse is greater and rarer than the comic, Molière ranks as an equal with Sophocles and Corneille. The reason for this apparent exception to the rule, he finds, is that Molière enjoyed the favors of the tragic muse as well as the comic, since *Le Tartuffe* and *Le Misanthrope*, by the profundity and "tristesse" of their comic, approach the tragic.¹⁷ Here, it would seem, rather than in Rousseau, lies the origin of the "déformation romantique" which has made the modern conception of Molière so different from that held by his contemporaries. Chateaubriand did not develop this interpretation, for great as the creator of *Tartuffe* and *Alceste* undoubtedly was, he offered no support for the thesis of the *Génie du Christianisme* and appealed but little to Chateaubriand's intimate taste. We must nevertheless give our critic credit for perceiving and expressing, if not very forcefully, a significant modern attitude toward France's great comic poet.

In La Fontaine, too, Chateaubriand found an appealing, but previously neglected, element: the quality of melancholy and sadness and dreaminess which always attracted the author of *René* and which the "immortel fabuliste,"¹⁸ as the modern reader well knows, possessed in considerable measure. His contemporaries may have been unaware of this dreaminess; its poetic value is a modern discovery. A feeling for this aspect of La Fontaine's art appears in *Les Natchez*¹⁹ and again in the article of 1801 on Young.²⁰ In the *Génie du Christianisme* the author points out—for the first time—that La Fontaine was one of the very rare seventeenth-century writers who had the quality of melancholy which he considered the most appealing, if not the highest, poetic element.²¹ Indeed La Fontaine, we are told, even used the word "mélancolie" in the sense in which Chateaubriand and his age employed it.²²

16. Otis E. Fellows, *French Opinion of Molière, 1800-1850*, Providence, Brown University, 1937.

17. *Mélanges littéraires*, in *Œuvres*, XXI, 62.

18. *Essai sur les révolutions*, in *Œuvres*, I, 134.

19. *Les Natchez*, ed. Chinard, Paris, Droz, 1932, p. 210.

20. *Mélanges littéraires*, in *Œuvres*, XXI, 33-34.

21. *Génie*, III, IV, 4, in *Œuvres*, XIII, 79-80.

22. *Ibid.*, II, IV, 3, in *Œuvres*, XII, 181-182.

The author of *René* also appreciated—unlike critics who preceded him—the individual quality of La Fontaine's genius, even to the point of declaring that if the poet's "incorrections" were taken from him his poetry would lose much of its charm.²³ He affirmed, Marcellus reports, that the title "grand poète" held for him such a connotation of perfection that he could bestow it only upon La Fontaine and Racine.²⁴ Finally in the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, describing his return journey from Karlsbad to Paris in 1833, the aging René confides that at Château-Thierry he found his "god," La Fontaine.²⁵

To Racine, the last of the seventeenth-century writers to be considered in the light of Chateaubriand's judgments, the critic devoted his longest and, in some respects, his most interesting discussion. It is also the best known, doubtless, since the "parallel" of Racine and Virgil in the *Génie du Christianisme* attracted immediate attention and the problem of Racine's Christian elements—first posed in the seventeenth century with regard to the Jansenism of *Phèdre* but vastly extended in an original way by Chateaubriand's great religious polemic—has not ceased to be a subject for debate. Less attracted to the supreme tragic poet by his religious preoccupation than by the musical and emotional qualities which struck a responsive chord in his own heart, Chateaubriand was the first to perceive and reveal to his contemporaries a new and delightful Racine.

Significantly enough, our critic devotes less attention to Racine's two Biblical tragedies, even in the *Génie du Christianisme*, than to the others, though he does remark that the poet's works became "purer" as their author became more religious, culminating in *Athalie*.²⁶ The discussion of *Athalie* in the *Génie* deals mainly, however, with the title character's dream, emphasizing especially the "génie sombre" of the Hebrew cult, together with the macabre and fantastic elements which characterize this passage in the tragedy.²⁷ A decade later, in the *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, the critic tells of reading *Athalie* beside the tomb of Josaphat, and shows full appreciation of the genius—above all of the musical genius—of its author.²⁸ And twenty-five years later, in the *Essai sur la littérature anglaise*, he does justice to *Esther*, previously overlooked. Here again Chateaubriand praises the quality which

23. *Mélanges littéraires*, in *Œuvres*, XXI, 345.

24. Marcellus, *Chateaubriand et son temps*, Paris, Lévy, 1859, p. 171.

25. *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, ed. Biré, Paris, Garnier, n.d., VI, 196.

26. *Génie*, III, IV, 5, in *Œuvres*, XIII, 86.

27. *Ibid.*, II, IV, 11, in *Œuvres*, XII, 210-220.

28. *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, in *Œuvres*, IX, 295.

he perceived as perhaps Racine's greatest gift: the subtle melodiousness of his language.²⁹

When Chateaubriand does turn to the religious elements which he finds in Racine's works, the results are sometimes extraordinary. From the scene of Phèdre's jealousy (*Phèdre*, Act IV, Scene 6), for example, he quotes the unhappy queen's despairing cry:

*Hélas! du crime affreux dont la honte me suit,
Jamais mon triste cœur n'a recueilli le fruit.*

Discussing this human, but essentially un-Christian, plaint, Chateaubriand goes far beyond his text and transposes Christianity into flagrantly romantic terms to conclude: "Cette femme, qui se *consoleroit d'une éternité de souffrance, si elle avoit joui d'un instant de bonheur*, cette femme n'est pas dans le *caractère antique*; c'est la *chrétienne réprouvée*, c'est la pécheresse tombée vivante entre les mains de Dieu: son mot est le mot du damné."³⁰ By his inference that Phèdre would willingly undergo eternal torment for a moment of mortal happiness—which Racine does not really imply—Chateaubriand makes her a romantic heroine *avant la lettre*.

Chateaubriand's significance as an original interpreter of Racine is perhaps more apparent in other judgments. Thus in the famous "parallel" of Racine and Virgil already mentioned the critic seems—in Sainte-Beuve's phrase—"un pareil qui juge avec amour de ses frères."³¹ If, on the whole, he really prefers Virgil to Racine, both seem to him almost perfect. He tries, moreover, not to betray his preference openly, since his thesis requires him to declare the Christian poet superior to the pagan. Qualities which the two possess in common include the musical excellence which the author of *René* finds one of the chief reasons for their irresistible appeal.³² But in the feeling for melancholy and sadness, he is forced to admit, the French poet failed to equal the Latin, doubtless because the society of the capital and court of Louis XIV withdrew the former too much from the solitude of nature.³³ For *Athalie*, perhaps, Racine should rank higher than Vir-

29. *Essai sur la littérature anglaise*, in *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Didot, 1843, v, 61.

30. *Génie*, II, III, 3, in *Œuvres*, XII, 125-126.

31. Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand et son groupe littéraire*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1889, I, 322-325.

32. *Génie*, II, II, 10, in *Œuvres*, XII, 92-93. Chateaubriand had an excellent ear for the music of French verse, since Maurice Grammont has shown (*Le Vers français*, Paris, 1904, pp. 370-375), after exhaustive analysis, that of six great poets chosen for their harmonious qualities—Racine, Hugo, Musset, Leconte de Lisle, Boileau, Lamartine—Racine ranks first, with only Hugo coming anywhere near him as a master of verbal music.

33. *Génie*, II, II, 10, in *Œuvres*, XII, 92-93.

gil, the critic grants; yet Virgil, the friend of solitary man and of life's "heures secrètes," has a quality which stirs one's heart more gently and pleasingly. Racine is more admirable, Virgil more lovable; the French poet has "des douleurs trop royales," whereas the Latin speaks more intimately to all walks of life. Racine's tableaux may be compared with the abandoned parks of Versailles—vast, sad, bathed in solitude, but with the hand of the artist, together with vestiges of grandeur, in the background;³⁴ Virgil's tableaux, however, without being any less noble, are not limited to certain perspectives on life: they represent all nature, including "les profondeurs des forêts, l'aspect des montagnes, les rivages de la mer, où des femmes exilées regardent, en pleurant, l'immensité des flots."³⁵

In spite of his obvious predilection for what we should term the romantic, or pre-romantic, elements in Racine's art, Chateaubriand still looked upon the dramatist as a brilliant illustration of the validity of the basic principles of classicism, especially of that principle which demands the portrayal of man's universal, permanent traits rather than the particular aspects lent him by his times and circumstances.³⁶ This idea is developed extensively in the *Essai sur la littérature anglaise*, in 1836, where the critic is anxious to deal a blow at the contemporary romantic drama, for by this date the author of *René* had turned bitterly against his followers and had repudiated the development which romanticism had taken in abandoning the directions for the "littérature nouvelle" which had been set forth in the *Génie du Christianisme*.³⁷

Chateaubriand differed less than he imagined from his younger contemporaries, however, for he reserved his greatest admiration for those classical writers who, like Racine, seemed to him to make a large place in their writings for the poignant, tender, melancholy, and musical elements which had nothing to do with the essential principles of classicism. His insistence upon these qualities led to a new conception of Racine's art—one which later critics have had to correct to some extent, but which was a welcome revelation to a generation accustomed only to the dogmatic criticism of Marmontel and La Harpe. For Chateaubriand was the first to find, beneath the polished surface lent Racine's tragedies by the refined society of Louis XIV's court and the

34. *Ibid.*, p. 96. Cf. also *Génie*, III, 1, 7, in *Œuvres*, XII, 320-321, for another "romantic" description of Versailles.

35. *Génie*, II, II, 10, in *Œuvres*, XII, 96-97.

36. Preface to *Études historiques*, in *Œuvres*, IV, xlv.

37. *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* in *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Didot, 1843, v, 53-56.

strict conventions of the classical age, the natural, human, musical qualities of a timeless poetic genius.

Neglected as it is today, the *Génie du Christianisme*—with others of Chateaubriand's writings—contains, then, interpretations which were new and significant enough to enlarge and modify previous conceptions of outstanding French classics. This can only mean that, with all his limitations, Chateaubriand was a critic of power, insight, and creative genius, since few, indeed, are the critics who may be cited as originators of new and fruitful interpretations of the great masters, as renewers or revitalizers of a splendid tradition. The poetic value of Pascal's sadness, melancholy, and sense of the infinite, the lyricism of Bossuet the "poet," the serious side of Molière's dramatic genius, La Fontaine's lyrical melancholy and dreaminess, and the musicality, human tenderness, and Christian character portrayal of Racine's tragedies—these "discoveries" by the author of the *Génie du Christianisme* are of first importance because they revealed new aspects of these men's genius to readers whose taste and insight had been left undeveloped by the sterile criticism of dogmatic literary arbiters, and, above all, because they have influenced a whole century's conception of the French classics.

All these original interpretations show common elements which suggest that what Chateaubriand really discovered—led to it as he was by his own temperament, his taste, the nature of his creative talent, and perhaps also by his increasing pessimism and disillusionment—was what one might call, following the title of the famous book by Emile Deschanel, "le romantisme des classiques." This is true, of course, only if the word "romantisme" is taken in a broad sense as applying to the lyrical, tender, dreamy, melancholy elements of literature as contrasted with the formal, disciplined aspects which earlier critics had over-emphasized. This romanticism is not, in any case, identical with the romanticism of the 1820's and the 1830's, since—and this is evidence of Chateaubriand's impressive, but often unrecognized, stature as a critic—in spite of the reaction against, or the transformation of, romanticism which is still going on, these "romantic" interpretations of five of the greatest French classical masters still deeply color our conception of their genius.

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A PARNASSIAN LA ROCHEFOUCAULD: MADAME DE LA ROCHE-GUYON

THE *Parnasse contemporain* of 1876 contains a poem, "Une Couronne," composed of two sonnets from the pen of one Isabelle Guyon, whose name is to be found in none of the standard sources of information on French literary history. The mystery surrounding this name is somewhat cleared when we discover that the second volume of the Lemerre *Anthologie des poètes français du XIX^e siècle* prints four compositions by a writer who signs herself Mme de La Roche-Guyon, two each from verse-collections entitled *La Volière ouverte* and *La Vie sombre* respectively. That Isabelle Guyon and Mme de La Roche-Guyon are one and the same person is established by the fact that the first of the sonnets of "Une Couronne" was reprinted in *Les Langueurs charmées*, a volume of sonnets brought out by Mme de La Roche-Guyon in 1898.¹ From the "notice" printed at the head of the selections in the *Anthologie* and written by Charles de Pomairols, we learn that the writer of the four poems is Isabelle-Nivière de La Roche-Guyon, the author of "plusieurs recueils de vers qui se distinguent par l'originalité du sentiment et la force de l'expression."² After a few words about these *recueils*, Pomairols concludes: "L'immortel moraliste qui a donné à la noble famille des La Rochefoucauld un si haut renom littéraire verrait continuer sa tradition et revivre la puissance de sa pensée par cette alliée de sa race, mère de ses descendants."³ Mme de La Roche-Guyon's connection with the La Rochefoucauld family³ is hinted at several times in her published volumes. But, in general, the noble lady definitely attempted to conceal her identity behind a screen of comparative anonymity. Of the six works from her pen in the possession of the Bibliothèque Nationale, one, *In Memoriam*, has no signature

1. The second sonnet is not reproduced in any of Mme de La Roche-Guyon's published works.

2. *Anthologie des poètes français du XIX^e siècle*, II, 283.

3. Her husband was of a line collateral to that of which the author of the *Maximes* was a member and which ended with Alexandre, duc de La Rochefoucauld, in 1762. As the son whose death is mourned in *In Memoriam* is referred to as Matthieu de La Rochefoucauld and as other relatives bearing this family name are mentioned in the same volume, the husband of the poetess was, apparently, a descendant of the second daughter of Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld, Marie, demoiselle de La Roche-Guyon, and her husband, Louis-Armand François de La Rochefoucauld de Roye, duc d'Estissac, and may have had the right to call himself both duc de La Roche-Guyon and duc de La Rochefoucauld, as was the case with several members of the family (see the *Larousse du XX^e siècle*, IV, 347).

whatsoever, and the other five are signed only with the initials I. R.-G. Whether because she deemed it unworthy of a woman of her caste to publish books over her full name or because she hesitated to take the world into the secrets of her private life, Mme de La Roche-Guyon succeeded in remaining almost completely anonymous. All that we know of her is confined to the date of her birth (given by the *Anthologie* as 1836) and such biographical facts as may be gleaned from her verse. That she was a woman of the highest social station and of an excellent education is obvious from her poetry, as is the additional fact that, during a large part of her adult life, she was a bitterly unhappy person.

Of the six volumes attributable to Mme de La Roche-Guyon, one, *L'Année shakespearienne*,⁴ is merely a compilation of translated verses from the complete works of Shakespeare, arranged calendar-wise, with several quotations for each day of the twelve months. The sole importance of the work is its demonstration of the fact that its compiler possessed a thorough familiarity with Shakespeare, a familiarity which extended, though probably in smaller degree, to other English poets. Mme de La Roche-Guyon merits some attention both for the philosophy underlying her verse and for the fact that she saw fit to cast many of her poems in one or another of three fixed forms popular in the France of the late Middle Ages or of the Renaissance: the *rondel*, the *dizain*, and the sonnet. As these forms were favorites with Théodore de Banville and those of the younger Parnassians who were more or less obviously influenced by him, the inclusion of Mme de La Roche-Guyon in the third *Parnasse contemporain*, of the editorial staff of which Banville was a member,⁵ becomes thoroughly comprehensible.

Of Mme de La Roche-Guyon's five volumes of original verse, the first, *La Volière ouverte* (Lemerre, 1877), is dedicated "à mon fils Antoine" and is a kind of log-book of happy motherhood. By far the larger majority of the poems in the collection are *dizains*, rhyming usually, though not invariably, in alexandrine couplets. The work is concerned exclusively with reflecting the joys and annoyances of parenthood and the successive stages of childhood; it is, perhaps intentionally, very naïve in subject-matter and simple to the point of prosiness in style; its poems may have been composed to be read aloud by mothers to very young children. But the state of contentment reflected in this volume was to be rudely shattered; Matthieu, one of the four fledglings in the "cage," was stricken with an illness which dragged out

4. Fischbacher, n.d. Lorenz gives 1880 as the date of publication of this volume.

5. See M. Souriau, *Histoire du Parnasse*, Paris, Spes, 1929, p. 407.

for two long years only to terminate in death. The record of this tragedy is preserved in a verse-collection entitled *In Memoriam* (1881). The volume was printed privately, without name of author or publisher, in a very limited edition of one hundred copies, with, as frontispiece, a picture of the handsome lad whose life had been so prematurely cut short. There is a hand-written statement in the B.N. copy of the work to the effect that the poems on pages 12 and 29 show that it was written "par Mme de La Rochefoucauld." The authorship of the work is established by a foot-note to a poem entitled "Renaissance" which reads: "Cité dans la *Volière ouverte*, poésies, A. Lemerre, éditeur." The two compositions referred to in the hand-written statement mentioned above are "Le Nom," in which allusion is made to a "tante" of the boy, a lady identified in a foot-note as Mme la Comtesse Olivier de La Rochefoucauld, and a poem "A Matthieu de La Rochefoucauld" by Louisa Siefert "en lui dédiant l'*Histoire du prince Bleu et de la princesse Rose*" (dated at Rochefort, Nov. 7, 1874). Many of the poems of *In Memoriam* were composed at Rochefort, in or near which must have been the estate of La Roche-Guyon; one of them, a composition in fifteen quatrains bearing the name of the town, speaks of it as the birthplace of the deceased Matthieu and the seat of the family residence. Another poem, "Aux aïeux (Galerie du château de La Roche-Guyon)," praises the celebrated author of the *Maximes* and other members of the famous family of which Matthieu was a descendant. Still another, "A ses amis," is addressed to eight of Matthieu's comrades, among whom are Guy de La Rochefoucauld and Fernand and Henri Nivière (cousins, in all likelihood). The work, as a whole, is moving, if somewhat monotonous; its title recalls, of course, Tennyson's elegy,⁶ and its contents ring the changes on Lamartine's line: "Un seul être vous manque et tout est dépeuplé."

The shock of the illness and death of her son made of Mme de La Roche-Guyon, at least for many of the subsequent years, a hopeless pessimist. Such, at least, is the impression gained from a perusal of her next volume, a collection of *dizains* entitled *La Vie sombre* (Lemerre, 1888). This work is divided into three books: "Pensées mélancoliques," "Pensées philosophiques," and "Pensées douloureuses." In the fifty-seven *dizains* comprising the "Pensées mélancoliques," the poetess is constantly haunted by thoughts of death and of the futility of life and its activities. Titles such as "Les Cimetières,"

6. One of the poems in *La Vie sombre*, "Profession de foi," has an epigraph from Tennyson.

"Le Cimetière de campagne," "L'Enterrement du vieux paysan," "La Chute des feuilles" (recalling Millevoye's poem of the same name), "Les Pleurs des choses," "Les Soupirs," and "Paysage triste" are typical. The tone and mood of the "Pensées mélancoliques" are the wintry gray of the title of one of its poems, "Grisaille d'hiver." In the fifty-nine "Pensées philosophiques," Mme de La Roche-Guyon gives voice to a much more positive pessimism. She is convinced of the uselessness of life, as she exclaims in "Les Inutiles":

*Ce qui rend si profond mon dégoût de la vie,
C'est son vide effrayant, son inutilité;
Pourquoi sommes-nous nés? Qu'en est-il résulté?"*

And she is equally sure that there is no hope of an after-life:

*Lorsque vient l'heure horrible, épouvantable, obscure,
Le trou s'ouvre, le ver nous tient dans sa morsure,
Et bien morts, nous dormons notre éternel sommeil
Sans été, sans hiver, sans espoir de réveil.⁸*

Almost completely cynical are the eighty-one "Pensées douloureuses." Here Mme de La Roche-Guyon has been stripped of all her illusions with regard to love, happiness, justice, useful activity. Life is worthless, evil ubiquitous, despair ever-present, and death the only goal. The poetess has lost faith in everything good:

*J'ai perdu toute foi: je ne crois plus qu'au mal!
Je me ris aujourd'hui de ce mot: Idéal.⁹*

A Baudelairean "Spleen" contains the lines:

*Sous le spleen dévorant, je sens mon front pâlir.
.
.
.
A quoi bon vivre alors? Qu'est le foyer sans flamme?
Mais à quoi bon mourir? Réponds donc, ô mon âme.
Ah! néant pour néant, je me confie au temps,
A lui, ce moissonneur d'hivers et de printemps.¹⁰*

By way of contrast with her own uncertainty, Mme de La Roche-Guyon pays a tribute to François Coppée in the following *dizain*:

*Combien je vous admire et vous aime, ô Poète,
Vous qui chantez l'azur et chantez la tempête,
L'insecte aux ailes d'or qui rase les étangs,
Les larmes de l'hiver, l'ivresse des printemps!*

7. *La Vie sombre*, p. 114.

8. "Même sujet," *ibid.*, p. 109.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

*En votre âme tout vit: lumière ou nuit, qu'importe!
 Vous donnez une voix même à la feuille morte;
 Vous voyez la grande aube au-delà du trépas,
 Et vous êtes heureux, vous qui ne savez pas
 La douleur d'être sourd au bruit de la nature,
 La douleur de se taire en cachant sa blessure.¹¹*

La Vie sombre is exactly what its title implies, a sombre book. Personal in feeling, it is, however, metaphysical rather than intimate in tone. It approaches thus, though somewhat remotely, the Parnassianism of Leconte de Lisle and Sully Prudhomme and, in its rebelliousness, the inverted Romanticism of Baudelaire. In form, it approaches the Parnassianism of Banville, one of whose favorite moulds, the *dizain*, it employs throughout; but in its scanty use of rich rhyme, in its occasional grammatical lapses and ineffectualness of expression, it is closer akin to the weaker verse of Lamartine and Musset. Very similar to *La Vie sombre* in all these respects is Mme de La Roche-Guyon's next volume, a collection of sonnets entitled *Les Langueurs charmées* (Lemerre, 1898). Dedicated to Coppée, the work is made up of seventy-five sonnets grouped into two "livres" called "Heures de jour" and "Heures de nuit." One of the poems of the second group attempts to explain the character of the poetess:

*Non! mon front n'avait point l'étoile du Poète:
 Mon âme était un champ où Dieu n'avait semé
 Que l'amour simple et pur, aimant pour être aimé,
 J'étais l'oiseau des bois, j'étais la pâquerette.*

*Je faisais de ma vie une éternelle fête,
 Je croyais mon bonheur de chacun acclamé,
 Et j'y portai mon cœur, mais sans l'avoir armé.
 Il est tombé sanglant dans un jour de tempête.*

*Depuis je n'ai connu que tristesses sans fin.
 Le passé me poursuit, le présent me consume,
 Et, vivante, je meurs et de soif et de faim.*

*Et parce que j'ai pris dans mes doigts une plume,
 Et que j'ai pu chanter et rire du dédain,
 Nul ne m'a pardonné ma tragique amertume.¹²*

She is still the victim of spleen and discouragement.

*Je sens le spleen affreux. Il hante mon esprit.
 Le mécontentement habite dans mon âme.*

11. "A François Coppée," *ibid.*, p. 172.

12. "La Vocation du poète," *Les Langueurs charmées*, p. 39.

*La tristesse la touche avec sa froide lame,
Et devant mon dégoût, tout mon être faiblit.*¹³

And she writes "Mon épitaphe," a wail of pitiable frustration:

*Ici dort pour toujours, rigide en son tombeau,
Celle qui succomba sous le poids de son âme.
Triste jardin sans fleur, sombre foyer sans flamme,
Le malheur l'étreignit en sortant du berceau!*

*Cependant elle aime l'Idéal et le Beau,
Mais de mille douleurs sa vie offrit le drame,
Elle, le vain jouet de l'éloge et du blâme,
Elle, cœur dont chacun voulut prendre un lambeau.*

*Passant, ne parle pas de cette pauvre femme!
Quand l'esquif rentre au port sans mât, voile ni rame,
Qu'importe alors le vent qui brisa ses agrès.*

*Elle est morte! Tais-toi! pleure, pleure en silence,
Elle n'a plus besoin de trompeuse espérance,
Elle n'a plus besoin maintenant que de paix!*¹⁴

Les Langueurs charmées, thus, might be said to recast into the mould of the sonnet the unhappy *dizains* of *La Vie sombre*.

The passage of the years brought only slight easement of Mme de La Roche-Guyon's pain but finally a suggestion of hope. These contradictory elements are set side by side in her last volume, *Le Cœur en larmes* (Lemerre, 1905), a collection of rondels published when the poetess was in her seventieth year. In the first of the four "livres" of this work, "Panthéisme sentimental," Mme de La Roche-Guyon is a nature-lover in the pagan manner, a worshipper of "Pan divin," whose death she mourns in such poems as "Pan n'aime plus" and "Pan n'est plus." She takes issue with those who hold Nature to be indifferent to the vicissitudes of man; "Indifférente, toi?" she exclaims, "Nature, oh! quelle erreur! Ne nous aimes-tu pas dès notre plus jeune âge?"¹⁵ She feels the bond of kinship with all that is in Nature:

*Univers, bois, lacs bleus, parfums là-bas si doux,
Nommez-moi votre sœur, car vous êtes mes frères.*¹⁶

Dissatisfied with her human relationships, Mme de La Roche-Guyon, like so many other poets before and since, sought and found some com-

13. "Découragement," *ibid.*, p. 52.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 82.—Among the "Heures de nuit" are poems with epigraphs from Montaigne, Maurice de Guérin, Browning, Thomas Hood, and Swinburne.

15. "Témoignage," *Le Cœur en larmes*, p. 22.

16. "Parenté," *ibid.*, p. 13.

fort on the expansive bosom of the "alma mater," Nature. But this comfort was apparently only intermittent and short-lived. In the second "book" of *Le Cœur en larmes*, "Pessimisme fervent," the poetess is again in the slough of Schopenhauerian pessimism and of confirmed agnosticism. Again she is penetrated with the uselessness of life, on the one hand, and with the undesirability of an afterworld, on the other. This mood carries over into the next "book," "L'Âme plaintive." Her sole remaining desire is to be allowed to "végéter en paix, Car j'ai trop, trop souffert dans ma pauvre existence."¹⁷ She is aware of the approach of the death-dealing scythe and that soon "il n'existera plus de 'Duchesse Isabelle.'"¹⁸ Even her poetry provides her no consolation, for her voice goes unheeded and she wears a stigma rather than an aureole:

*Poète, je le suis! Ce nom marque mon front,
Il pèse lourdement sur les jours que je traîne,
Soulevant, sous mes pas, une implacable haine,
Le froid isolement et le dédain profond.*

*Je chante, cependant, quand rien ne me répond,
Je chante, malgré moi, l'aube charmante et vaine.
Poète, je le suis! Ce nom marque mon front,
Il pèse lourdement sur les jours que je traîne.*

*Poète, je le suis, pour plier sous l'affront;
Poète, je le suis, pour mourir de ma peine,
Pour voler, frêle oiseau, vers la plage lointaine
Où mon cœur croit trouver des cœurs qui l'aimeront.
Poète, je le suis! Ce nom marque mon front!¹⁹*

In "Le Jardin du soir," the last "book" of *Le Cœur en larmes*, we at last encounter a spirit of genuine resignation, a feeling of gratitude for life's gifts, and even a grasping at Faith as "le masque enchanté" of existence and at a hope for immortality ("Je rêve d'une vie ayant un lendemain"²⁰). The refrain of "Ferme volonté" (dedicated to Coppée) echoes this sentiment:

*Je veux croire à cela, cette chose étonnante,
De l'âme survivant à son corps. Je le veux.²¹*

One would have to know more of the actual facts in the life and personality of Mme de La Roche-Guyon to be able to judge fairly as

17. "Dernier désir," *ibid.*, p. 242.

18. "Méditation," *ibid.*, p. 251.

19. "Poète," *ibid.*, p. 160.

20. "Le Viatique," *ibid.*, p. 288.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

to the sincerity of her poetry. Certainly it seems strange that a woman of her social position, wealth, and culture, the wife of a scion of one of France's oldest and most distinguished families and the mother of a quartet of sons, should have sunk into a veritable abyss of complaining grief and pessimism. Perhaps her family life was not all it should have been; perhaps she had character traits which rendered friendship difficult; perhaps there was in her something of what the psychologists call exhibitionism. There would seem to be a contradiction in the behavior of a woman who, on the one hand, acts as though she were the only mother ever to lose an adolescent son and, on the other, painstakingly fashions *dizains*, sonnets, and rondels (the last two, at least, among the most difficult of verse-forms) in lamentation of her bitter lot. Perhaps her alliance with a member of the La Rochefoucauld family inspired in her the desire to emulate the cynicism of the author of the *Maximes* and the death of her son provided her with the occasion. Be that as it may, the duchess Isabelle-Nivière de La Roche-Guyon possessed a modicum of poetic talent; with something of the restraint and artlessness of her contemporary, Louise Ackermann, she might have been entitled to a higher place among the French philosophical lyricists of the nineteenth century.

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SOURCE ET EMPLOI D'UN ÉPISODE DANS *A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPS PERDU*

UN DES PROBLÈMES qui se présente à l'esprit de tout lecteur attentif de Proust est celui de la répétition. Cette "répétition universelle" signalée par le Dr. Ch. Blondel¹ est si essentielle au roman qu'il est à peu près impossible de trouver situations, gestes, caractères ou même mots, qui n'aient tôt ou tard un ou plusieurs échos; modifiés mais reconnaissables, comme tout écho.² Le mode de la répétition, arbitraire et conscient, touche à la question de l'unité de l'œuvre de Proust, de sa perpétuelle croissance, de l'appauvrissement des derniers volumes (avant *Le Temps retrouvé*), et de la réussite unique des autres.

Il est intéressant de suivre cette répétition à travers une anecdote, qui a l'avantage de n'avoir pas été prise à la vie même de Proust, ce qui en simplifie l'étude. Elle mérite d'autant plus notre attention que Proust lui accorde une place et un nombre de pages assez considérables.

En effet parmi les nombreux dîners, thés et soirées qui sont décrits successivement par Marcel Proust dans son roman, il est une soirée particulièrement importante à cause de la position qu'elle occupe en plein centre de l'œuvre, et aussi à cause de l'ampleur qui lui est donnée. C'est le bal chez la Princesse de Guermantes, qui tient environ deux cents pages entre le moment où Marcel lit l'invitation suivante: "La Princesse de Guermantes, née duchesse de Bavière, sera chez elle le . . .,"³ et celui où Marcel quitte le duc et la duchesse de Guermantes, à la fin de cette soirée, pour aller retrouver Albertine.⁴

Etroitement lié à la présentation du bal est un épisode qui se déroule à travers un nombre presque égal de pages et qui concerne uniquement le duc et la duchesse de Guermantes:

Le jour où devait avoir lieu la soirée chez la princesse de Guermantes, j'appris que le duc et la duchesse étaient revenus à Paris depuis la veille. Le bal de la princesse ne les eût pas fait revenir, mais un de leurs cousins était fort malade et puis

1. *La Psychographie de Marcel Proust*, Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1932. Cf. Ch. 3, "La répétition universelle."

2. Il ne s'agit pas ici de répétitions qui peuvent être accidentelles comme celles que signale M. Philip Kolb: "Inadvertent repetitions of material in *A la recherche du temps perdu*," *PMLA*, LI (1936), 249.

3. *Côté de Guermantes*, III, 248. Toutes les références sont à l'édition "à la gerbe," Gallimard, 1930.

4. *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, I, 173.

le duc tenait beaucoup à une redoute qui avait lieu cette nuit-là et où lui-même devait paraître en Louis XI et sa femme en Isabeau de Bavière.⁵

Bal, redoute: ce sont des obligations mondaines, des plaisirs impérieux, secondaires toutefois si nous les comparons à l'obligation non moins mondaine, et plus impérieuse, qu'entraîne la mort d'un parent. Les deux obligations coïncident, et un seul geste, le retour à Paris, les remplit toutes deux. Mais elles ne tardent pas à s'opposer l'une à l'autre. Au moment où le duc et la duchesse s'apprêtent à se déguiser pour aller à la redoute, en rentrant du bal, M. de Guermantes se voit affronter par deux cousines qui montent la garde fidèlement sur l'escalier, devant sa porte:

"Basin, nous avons tenu à vous prévenir de peur que vous ne soyez vu à cette redoute; le pauvre Amanian vient de mourir, il y a une heure." Le duc eut un instant d'alarme. Il voyait la fameuse redoute s'effondrer pour lui du moment . . . qu'il était averti de la mort de M. d'Osmond. Mais il se ressaisit bien vite et lança aux deux cousines ce mot où il faisait entrer, avec la détermination de ne pas renoncer au plaisir, son incapacité d'assimiler exactement les tours de la langue française: "Il est mort! Mais non, on exagère!"⁶

Et la redoute n'est pas sacrifiée.

Cet épisode, de son introduction à sa conclusion, fait partie de la trame du récit qui s'organise autour de la soirée de la Princesse, et reparaît à intervalles: plus la redoute approche, plus la mort menace. Et plus l'attitude du duc, harcelé par deux obligations contraires, devient transparente. Qu'il y ait une commune mesure entre les deux choses, si peu commensurables que sont une redoute et la mort d'un parent, et enfin que le plaisir l'emporte sur le deuil, voilà qui, du début discret au mot de la fin, devient progressivement clair; et toute la science mondaine du duc est mise à contribution pour ôter du chemin de ses plaisirs cette gêne qu'est une mort inconsidérée.

Dans l'après-midi qui précède le bal, la princesse de Silistrie vient voir les Guermantes, rentrés à Paris, surtout à cause de la maladie de leur cousin.

Elle parla avec tristesse au duc d'un cousin germain à lui . . . dont l'état de santé très atteint depuis quelque temps, s'était subitement aggravé. Mais il était visible que le duc, tout en compatissant au sort de son cousin et en répétant, "Pauvre Mama! C'est un si bon garçon" portait un diagnostic favorable.⁷

Un peu plus tard, deux cousines, Mme de Plassac et Mme de Tresme,

5. *Côté de Guermantes*, III, 253.

6. *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, I, 172.

7. *Côté de Guermantes*, III, 257.

"vinrent faire visite à Basin et déclarèrent que l'état du cousin Mama ne laissait plus d'espoir."⁸ Le problème est posé.

Le duc rappela le valet de pied pour savoir si celui qu'il avait envoyé chez le cousin d'Osmond était revenu. En effet le plan du duc était le suivant : comme il voyait avec raison son cousin mourant, il tenait à faire prendre des nouvelles avant la mort, c'est à dire avant le deuil forcé. Une fois couvert par la certitude officielle qu'Amanian était encore vivant, il ficherait le camp à son dîner, à la soirée du prince, à la redoute où il serait en Louis XI et où il avait le plus piquant rendez-vous avec une nouvelle maîtresse. Et il ne ferait plus prendre de nouvelles avant le lendemain quand les plaisirs seraient finis. Alors on prendrait le deuil s'il avait trépassé dans la soirée.⁹

Pour assurer le succès complet à cette stratégie des formes et des convenances, M. de Guermantes donne à son valet l'ordre de disparaître : "Sortez, allez où vous voudrez, faites la noce, découchez, mais je ne veux pas de vous ici avant demain matin."¹⁰ Si la mort ne peut être empêchée, les nouvelles de la mort seront au moins retardées; et les Guermantes font une entrée brillante au bal. "Quelques bonnes langues eurent beau se précipiter sur le duc pour l'empêcher d'entrer, 'Mais vous ignorez donc que le pauvre Mama est à l'article de la Mort? On vient de l'administrer.' 'Je le sais, je le sais,' répondit M. de Guermantes en refoulant le fâcheux pour entrer. 'Le viatique a produit le meilleur effet.'"¹¹

Le "on exagère" final de M. de Guermantes n'est donc qu'une dernière expression de sa volonté tenace d'empêcher que les convenances mondaines qui régissent la mort, n'entravent son plaisir. Proust s'arrête assez longuement à cet épisode, en souligne comme à plaisir les traits et ne craint pas de pousser jusqu'à l'exagération comique les actions, les gestes, les mots du duc, et sa complète inconscience.

Ceci est d'autant plus intéressant qu'au fond de tout ce développement se trouve une assez courte anecdote que Marcel Proust doit peut-être à son ami, Robert de Montesquiou. En effet, nous lisons dans les mémoires¹² du comte l'anecdote suivante:¹³

Au cours de la dernière maladie de mon frère Gontran il y eut un bal costumé qui fit assez de fureur; c'est une forme du comique macabre du séjour des grandes

8. *Ibid.*, 259.

9. *Ibid.*, 262.

10. *Côté de Guermantes*, III, 274.

11. *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, I, 89.

12. *Les Pas effacés*, Emile-Paul, 1923, I, 277.

13. L'anecdote a dû être racontée ou lue par Robert de Montesquiou à Marcel Proust, car le *Côté de Guermantes* a paru avant les *Pas effacés*, publication posthume; de son côté, Montesquiou ne paraît pas avoir lu le *Côté de Guermantes* avec grand soin, car il affirme avoir trouvé à peu près impossible la lecture des *Jeunes Filles en fleurs* et ne parle guère du *Côté de Guermantes*.

villes que les perplexités auxquelles ces sortes de circonstances livrent les mondains pris entre le désir de se mettre en chienlits et la crainte d'un deuil possible qui rendrait la dépense vaine. . . .

Telle fut alors la passe dans laquelle une agonie indiscrete jetait nos cousins A ***; voici comment ils s'y prirent pour ménager la crêpe et le tulle, pour concilier le sanglot d'Electre avec la cadence de Terpsichore.

Pour commencer, quotidiennement, des nouvelles, aussi intéressantes qu'intéressées, furent prises, de leur part avec beaucoup de sollicitude, au domicile du gèneur dans le dessein de *masquer* (c'est le lieu de le dire) la préférence qu'ils donnaient à leurs plaisirs sur nos pleurs, pour le cas où la suite de l'aventure le porterait jusqu'à l'inconvenance comme il advint.

Le jour de gala, nous en étions à réciter les prières des agonisants, le malade râlait. Cet après-midi-là, le bulletin fut consulté plus tôt que de coutume pour lui laisser le temps de devenir le dernier; quant au dernier soupir, comme il n'était pas encore rendu, rien n'empêchait, n'est-ce-pas? de remettre les lacrymatoires au lendemain et d'être tout aux flûtes, les unes d'harmonie, les autres d'ambrosie. . . .

Par malheur il y a toujours des oursons bienveillants, des redresseurs de torts et des fumistes atteints du goût de mettre les choses en place, non moins que les gens dans l'embarras. Ce fut l'un des trois . . . qui guetta mes proches, sur la première marche de l'escalier flamboyant . . . pour leur rendre le service de les arrêter à temps, et de les faire non seulement rentrer en eux-mêmes, ce qui n'était déjà pas gai, mais chez eux, ce qui était plus ennuyeux encore, en leur jetant au nez l'inopportune nouvelle que le patient venait d'expirer. . . . A***, . . . d'un coup de son gibus autoritaire, poussa, dans la direction des salles de danse, l'antenne inquiète de cette fille d'Aristée,¹⁴ puis au fâcheux avertisseur, . . . il lança nettement cette verte réponse . . . : 'On exagère.'

Tous les éléments qui paraissent dans l'épisode de la mort de Mama sont également présents dans cette page: le bal masqué; le cousin mourant; la tactique des nouvelles prises de manière à éviter l'inconvenance et le deuil; l'avertissement à l'entrée du bal; le geste du duc qui pousse sa femme en avant, et le mot final.

Quelle différence pourtant dans l'usage que font les deux auteurs de cette même histoire! Montesquiou l'isole, l'analyse, la définit, et juge gestes et mots avec âpreté. Cette "comédie macabre" doit servir à flétrir des êtres pour qui la mort est une "agonie indiscrete" et qui préfèrent le plaisir aux pleurs. Ce que Montesquiou raconte comme une chose exceptionnelle, isolée, Proust l'incorpore à un ensemble complexe de gestes et de paroles qui ont une place à peu près égale dans la constitution de cette journée. Le duc envoie son valet aux nouvelles, reçoit Marcel, cause avec Swann, avec un égal souci de tout subordonner aux préparatifs du bal. D'autre part, la situation chez Proust est compliquée par un plus grand nombre d'étapes; car il y a quatre avertisse-

14. La femme d'A *** , costumée, pour le bal, en abeille.

ments, et non un seul. La réaction du duc en face de ces avertissements répétés, *se répète automatiquement* et ne fait que croître en vigueur, à mesure que son plaisir à lui est menacé. Le mot de la fin perd tout caractère anecdotique; ce n'est plus une boutade lancée au hasard dans un moment d'impatience; c'est l'expression même de l'attitude constante, quoiqu'informulée et masquée par les conventions, qu'a le duc dans toutes les circonstances de sa vie; du "côté" du duc de Guermantes, la recherche du plaisir égoïste immédiat, voilà la seule loi, tout lui est subordonné, jusqu'au respect même des formes de politesse lorsqu'elles cessent de la masquer pour en menacer le libre exercice.

Proust suggère, et crée au lieu d'analyser. Le schéma abstrait de Montesquiou se revêt d'une vie complexe; l'auteur et le juge disparaissent; la "comédie macabre" s'est déroulée devant nos yeux, sans commentaire, ni des personnages, ni de l'auteur. Et l'équivalence entre la conduite des personnages et la loi morale qui les régit est établie sans que Proust ait eu à l'interpréter pour nous: il l'a mise en action et lui a donné, par la répétition, un caractère de reflexe automatique.

Ce qui chez Montesquiou est anecdote, prend donc une bien plus grande ampleur chez Proust, et devient une manifestation particulièrement révélatrice d'un trait fondamental et constant chez le duc de Guermantes. Son importance croît encore lorsque nous constatons que sous une forme plus ou moins modifiée cette histoire reparaitra par trois fois dans le roman.

Au moment où la duchesse Oriane s'apprête à monter en voiture, le soir de la fameuse redoute, elle apprend de Swann lui-même qu'il ne lui reste que peu de temps à vivre. "Qu'est-ce que vous me dites là, s'écria la duchesse en s'arrêtant une seconde dans sa marche vers la voiture et en levant ses beaux yeux bleus et mélancoliques mais pleins d'incertitude."¹⁵ Devant cette nouvelle fâcheuse la duchesse hésite un instant, mais entraînée par le duc "Madame de Guermantes s'avança décidément vers la voiture et redit un dernier adieu à Swann, 'Vous savez, nous reparlerons de cela, *je ne crois pas un mot* de ce que vous me dites, mais il faut en parler ensemble. On vous aura bêtement effrayé,'"¹⁶ et le duc en partant "cria à la cantonnade et d'une voix de stentor, de la porte, à Swann qui était déjà dans la cour: 'Et puis vous, ne vous laissez pas frapper par ces bêtises des médecins, que diable! Ce sont des ânes. Vous vous portez comme le Pont-Neuf. Vous nous enterreront tous.'"¹⁷ En somme, le mot même n'y est pas, mais la

15. *Côté de Guermantes*, II, 284.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 285.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

conclusion est la même, Swann et les médecins exagèrent. Et Swann mourant, l'ami préféré de la duchesse, mieux que le mourant, proche parent des Guermantes, voit que pour les Guermantes il est plus important d'aller au bal avec des pantoufles de la bonne couleur, que de dire un mot de sympathie à un ami irrévocablement condamné.

Ces deux épisodes, si proches l'un de l'autre, ne se répètent pas inutilement; dans le second il s'agit des convenances qu'exigerait l'amitié devant la mort, et de l'attitude de la duchesse, tout autant que de celle du duc. Un peu moins automatique et brutale que celle du duc, l'attitude d'Oriane, et ses paroles en sont pourtant une si exacte répétition, que nous sommes tentés d'y voir ce fond commun, automatique qui constitue "l'espèce Guermantes" et auquel les individus de l'espèce se conforment absolument, quoique chacun le fasse suivant un mode individuel; sommes-nous ici en face d'un trait du "schéma Guermantes"? Non, car cette attitude en face de la mort, nous la retrouvons dans un tout autre milieu, celui des Verdurin.

Les habitués de la Raspelière arrivent à l'habituel dîner du mercredi: "Mais à propos du jeune violoniste, continua Brichot, j'oubliais, Cottard, de vous parler de la grande nouvelle. Savez-vous que notre pauvre ami Dechambre, l'ancien pianiste favori de Madame Verdurin, vient de mourir? C'est effrayant."¹⁸ Les fidèles échangent quelques propos à ce sujet, puis reprennent leurs conversations habituelles jusqu'à l'arrivée à la Raspelière où la question du deuil se pose. Dans quel état sera Madame Verdurin? Le dîner sera-t-il remis? Le mot d'ordre lancé par Monsieur Verdurin est de ne parler de rien. "Comment, vous parlez encore de Dechambre?" dit Monsieur Verdurin qui nous avait précédés et qui, voyant que nous ne le suivions pas, était revenu en arrière. 'Ecoutez,' dit-il à Brichot, '*il ne faut d'exagération en rien.* . . .'¹⁹ La mort de Dechambre, les réactions du clan Verdurin devant cette mort, celle des Verdurin eux-mêmes se développent sur dix pages du roman et aboutissent à ce mot déjà entendu sous une autre forme. Après quoi la soirée se déroule en toute tranquillité.

Voici enfin la soirée célèbre donnée par Madame Verdurin, aux invités aristocratiques du Baron de Charlus, en l'honneur de Morel: soirée dans laquelle meurt l'amie inséparable des Verdurins, la Princesse Sherbatoff. "Au moment où nous allions sonner à la porte de l'hôtel nous fûmes rattrapés par Saniette qui nous apprit que la Princesse Sherbatoff était morte à six heures."²⁰ Les invités entrent, se

18. *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, II, 44.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

20. *La Prisonnière*, II, 31.

débarrassent de leurs pardessus et sont accueillis par Monsieur Verdurin. "Monsieur Verdurin, à qui nous fîmes nos condoléances pour la princesse Sherbatoff, nous dit, 'Oui, je sais qu'elle est très mal.' 'Mais elle est morte à six heures' s'écria Saniette. 'Vous, vous exagérez toujours,' dit brutalement à Saniette Monsieur Verdurin, qui, la soirée n'étant pas décommandée, préférait l'hypothèse de la maladie."²¹

Nous sommes évidemment en face d'une utilisation multiple d'une même anecdote. Dans les quatre cas relevés il s'agit d'un événement mondan, bal ou dîner, et d'une mort; d'une situation contradictoire où les conventions sociales exigeraient le respect des sentiments soit de famille, soit d'amitié; enfin d'une évocation brutale hors des conventions s'exprimant par le même mot, "exagération," appliqué à l'état le moins susceptible de le supporter, la mort. Cette utilisation est-elle inconsciente, simple réminiscence involontaire? Proust utilise cette anecdote de manière différente, mais avec une parfaite symétrie; il s'agit deux fois du couple Guermantes, deux fois du couple Verdurin; et la symétrie dans la répétition paraît exclure le hasard et indiquer plutôt qu'il y a là effort réfléchi et but conscient. La répétition de l'épisode devient un moyen de donner à l'anecdote un sens que, seule, elle n'aurait pas. Elle a une valeur par elle-même.

Et d'abord, par cette répétition, Proust lie le groupe Verdurin au groupe Guermantes, et les définit par un même automatisme. Il le fait d'une façon concrète et indirecte. La coïncidence d'une même réaction, dans des circonstances à peu près identiques, mais dans deux groupes différents, pourrait être un hasard. Mais la répétition de cette réaction, non seulement dans le cadre de chaque groupe, mais d'un groupe à l'autre, élimine le hasard. Pour nous faire sentir la profonde identité des Guermantes aux Verdurins, en dehors de toutes leurs différences individuelles, Proust aligne exactement le nombre suffisant de cas: quatre; par ce moyen, les gestes et les mots qui se déploient dans cette série d'incidents successifs et distincts deviennent, à nos yeux mêmes, de plus en plus impersonnels, mécaniques; les gestes se détachent des individus, n'appartenant en propre ni au duc, ni à Monsieur Verdurin; les mots se détachent de la conscience individuelle; ils jouent automatiquement. De gré ou de force nous les voyons s'imposer à nous comme inéluctables et nécessaires à une réalité non-individuelle, "un groupe," une "espèce" dont le duc et la duchesse sont un exemplaire, Monsieur et Madame Verdurin, un autre exemplaire.

Cette étude, si limitée soit-elle, pose le problème du rôle de la réalité

21. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

dans l'œuvre de Proust. L'histoire fut rapportée par Montesquiou, mais il n'en fut pas témoin. Elle nous paraît, comme toute anecdote, possible mais déjà une caricature, un peu au delà du vraisemblable. Sa répétition, toutefois, et la répétition du mot "exagérer" qui est si insistante, la fait passer, malgré les variations de circonstances qui l'entourent, nettement dans le domaine de l'invraisemblance. Il semble donc que Proust se sert de son histoire de manière à donner l'impression d'un mécanisme, pris à notre expérience, mais détaché d'elle en quelque sorte parce qu'accentué; c'est le mécanisme d'un monde et d'êtres stylisés, subordonnés à une idée qu'ils sont chargés de rendre visible, et d'imposer par une illustration concrète.

Et l'on peut se demander si Proust n'a pas voulu créer chez le lecteur la sensation d'un monde fermé, complexe, confus en apparence, pourtant strictement ordonné jusque dans cette confusion, se répétant en se renouvelant suivant un mécanisme déterminé et inéluctable, qui se dégagerait peu à peu à travers la multiplicité des événements, interprétation de l'expérience humaine stylisée et rendue sensible au lecteur à travers la vision, la compréhension de l'artiste. Une trame de vie complexe et subtile, faite de détails matériels soigneusement ordonnés, enveloppe et soutient l'histoire de la mort de Mama, dont le sens n'est "pas promulgué en termes logiques";²² elle s'appauvrit considérablement, mais existe lorsqu'il s'agit de la mort de Dechambre, pour disparaître complètement à la fin, dans une anecdote *racontée*, expliquée même, au lecteur.

Composition une, et pourtant croissance; même schéma et une multiplicité d'exemples nouveaux: ne se pourrait-il pas que Proust, justement parce que c'était là l'effort le plus considérable qu'il dût fournir, abandonnât de plus en plus le souci d'étoffer son monde; s'en tenant davantage au schéma théorique de son interprétation; accumulant sans cesse de nouvelles "preuves" de la vérité de ces lois au détriment de son souci esthétique; et qu'il gardât ainsi fortement le sentiment de l'unité de son œuvre à travers toutes les modifications qu'il lui fait subir? Il ne peut pas, dit-il, "modifier les conditions" où il "expérimente la vérité" et que son "caprice ne choisit pas."²³ Son livre, par sa composition, me paraît imiter très exactement les conditions d'une "expérience," à grande échelle, dont l'étude ferait la matière d'un autre article.

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22. Louis de Robert, *Comment débuta Marcel Proust*, p. 69.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

FRENCH *-IER* FROM LATIN *-ARIU*

THE ARISING of the French suffix *-ier*, *-ière* out of an original Latin *-ariu*, *-aria* is one of the most controversial points in Romance linguistics.¹ While theories are as numerous and varied as the scholars who advance them, it is possible to classify them in five general groups:

1. *-ariu*, with transposition of the *i* in hiatus that becomes *ï* in Vulgar Latin, turns into **-airu*; the diphthong *ai* becomes *e*, and this *e*, endowed with open quality, joins the general development of Classical Latin free short stressed *e* and diphthongizes into *ie* (*-ariu* > **-airu* > **-eru* > *-ier*). This theory, advanced by Schuchardt,² is elaborated upon by Meyer-Lübke,³ who attempts to establish a chronological differentiation in development between *-ariu* > *-ier* and *-aria* > *-aire* (Latin *area* > French *aire*, etc.), with *-ière* arising from analogy of *-ier*.

Apart from the objection that *variu* gives OF *vair*, not **vier*, the crucial phonological difficulty with this theory is that Old French regularly preserves the diphthong *ai*, and does not reduce it, even in pronunciation, to the monophthong *e* until at least the end of the eleventh century;⁴ *-ier*, on the other hand, appears as early as the *Eulalie*. Additional difficulty is presented by the fact that in Spanish, where the transposition of *ï* and the merging of *ai* into *e* is definitely established, the resulting monophthong is from the very outset treated as closed *e*, not as open *e*; the tenth-century Glosses of San Millán offer *terzero* < *tertiariu* side by side with such diphthongized forms as *tienet*, *buena mientre*, *liebat*, *sieculos* (Italian forms in *-iere*, *-ieri*, *-iero*, which were at one time thought to have had a native development along the same lines as French *-ier* are now generally admitted to be of imported French or Provençal origin;⁵ this belief appears likely not only because of the nature of the words in question, but also by reason of the fact that such forms do not appear before the twelfth century⁶). Acceptance

1. For a complete discussion and evaluation of the hypotheses that have been advanced, cf. E. R. Zimmermann, *Die Geschichte des lateinischen Suffixes -arius in den romanischen Sprachen*, Darmstadt, 1895; and E. Staaf, *Le suffixe -arius dans les langues romanes*, Upsal, 1896.

2. *Vokalismus des Vulgärlateins*, II, 454, 521, 528.

3. *Grammaire des langues romanes*, § 235, § 522.

4. Schwan-Behrens, *Grammaire de l'ancien français*, I, § 56, 1; § 223.

5. D'Ovidio & Meyer-Lübke, *Grammatica storica della lingua e dei dialetti italiani*, p. 86; Grandgent, *From Latin to Italian*, § 24, 2; Staaf, pp. 132-151.

6. The form *rasteliero* < **rastellariu*, appearing in a document of Ravenna of the year 752, is reported by Fantuzzi, *Monumenti ravennati*, Venezia, 1801-1804, IV, 155, and

of the Schuchardt-Meyer-Lübke theory therefore involves: 1. a phonological change of *ai* > *e*, occurring exclusively in the group **-airu*, at a period when this change is otherwise unattested in French; 2. a treatment of this *e* as open *e*, with consequent diphthongization into *ie*, contrary to what occurs in other sections of Romance territory, notably Spain and Portugal, where the *e* resulting from *ai* is closed. French, and perhaps Provençal, would therefore have a development which is not only unique in all Romania, but at variance with their own normal phonological evolution.

2. *-ariu*, which would normally give *-er* or *-eir*, is influenced by the numerous forms in which it is preceded by *i* or a palatal; the development of *-ariu* into *-ier* is thus partly phonological, partly analogical. This hypothesis, first advanced by Gaston Paris,⁷ is, with certain modifications, adopted by Cohn,⁸ Zimmermann,⁹ and accepted by Darmesteter, Brunot, Nyrop and others.

The principal objections to it are: 1. that *-iariu*, had it developed to **-iairu*, **-ieiru*, should ultimately have been reduced to **-ir*, not to *-ier*; 2. that it fails to account for Provençal and southwestern French *-eir*, *-er* forms.

3. The theory of a "psychological" replacement of *-ariu* in the Vulgar Latin period by *-eriu* is advanced in considerable detail by Gröber.¹⁰ Original Latin words in *-eriu*, joined by those in *-ēriu*, according to this theory extended their sway over the *-ariu* forms, giving rise to French *-ier* and Italian *-iere*, *-ieri*, *-iero*. This theory, with modifications, is restated by Marchot,¹¹ Skok,¹² and, for Provençal, by Crescini,¹³ the latter author, commenting upon the double and triple forms

cited by Gloria, *Del volgare illustre*, Venezia, 1880, p. 115. Considerable doubt attaches, however, to the authenticity and proper dating of Fantuzzi's collection.

7. *Romania*, IX, 330.

8. *Die Suffixwandelung im Vulgärlatein und im vorlitterarischen Französisch*, p. 274 ff.

9. *Op. cit.*

10. "Vulgärlateinische Substrate romanischer Wörter," *Archiv für lateinische Lexicographie*, I, 204 ff.

11. *Solution de quelques difficultés de la phonétique française*; also *ZRP*, XVII, 288; XIX, 61.

12. *ZPR*, LIV, 187-191. Skok presents the following attractive hypothesis: the Greek suffix *-ήριον*, with original open pronunciation of Greek *η*, gives rise, in loan-words borrowed by Latin, particularly those of a religious nature (*psaltērion*, *monastērion*, *plastērion*, *potērion*, *baptistērion*, etc.) to a Vulgar Latin *-eriu*, which Christianity, at a period of intense religious activity, extends even to non-Romance languages (Serbo-Croatian *molstir*). The psychological force of this religious *-eriu* is sufficient to bring about a widespread replacement of *-ariu*. Unfortunately, the handling of Greek *η* in Latin is by no means consistent (cf. Grandgent, *Introduction to Vulgar Latin*, § 182); closed *e* and even *i* developments appear in Vulgar Latin and Romance somewhat more frequently than open *e* ones; cf. also *infra* note 14.

13. *Manuale per l'avviamento agli studi provenzali*, pp. 39-40.

of Provençal (*empeir*, *empier* < *imperiu*; *feira*, *feira*, *fiera* < *feria*) suggests a double development: *-ariu* > *-ēriu* > *-eir* > on the one hand *-ieir*, *-ir* and on the other *-er*.

Objections to this suffix-substitution theory are: 1. words with an *-ēriu* suffix, even with the reenforcement of *-ēriu*, are far less numerous and popular in Latin than *-ariu* words; attraction should logically have worked in the opposite direction; 2. French forms such as *archer*, *berger*, etc. indicate development of the palatal as before *a*, not as before *e*; 3. there is little ground for admitting that *-ēriu* was joined by *-ēriu* before the dawn of the Romance period; words with the latter suffix display normal *ē* tendencies in the Merovingian and early Carolingian documents¹⁴ instead of the *ě* tendency to remain unchanged; 4. in French, the normal phonological outcome of *-ēriu* should be **-ieir*, **-ir*; that of *-ēriu* should be **-eir*; in neither case *-ier*; 5. if, in accordance with Gröber's views, Italian *-iere*, *-iero* is taken to be a native development of *-ēriu*, the question arises why the Italian outcome is not **-ieio*, in accordance with normal Italian development, which presents *-aio* < *-ariu* and *-uoio* < *-oriu*.

4. Other substitution theories are advanced by Ascoli,¹⁵ who supposes a Vulgar Latin form **-aeru*, and by Horning,¹⁶ who supposes a replacement of *-arius* by *-aris*. The first replacement form appears extremely hypothetical, while the second is open to the same objection as that of the replacement of *-ariu* by *-ēriu*; the *-arius* suffix is far stronger and more popular than the *-aris*.

5. The supposition of a Germanic influence in the French development is advanced by A. Thomas.¹⁷ Germanic proper names in *-aris*, assimilated in Vulgar Latin to the *-arius* type, but subject to an umlaut tendency which turns the *a* into *e*, are said by Thomas to have influenced the entire course of development of *-ariu*, turning it into *-eru*, with open *e*, then into *-ier*. This view is accepted by Anglade.¹⁸

To this theory it may be objected that if the Germanic proper names in question joined the *-ariu* class, as they undoubtedly did, they would

14. Cf. Pei, *The Language of the Eighth-Century Texts in Northern France*, pp. 20-25, 364; the word *monastērium* displays the customary Vulgar Latin tendency to change *ē* to *i* (*monestirio*, *monasthyrio*, etc.), while *ē* regularly remains unchanged; yet this word subsequently develops into the *monstier* of early Old French, indicating a shift to the *-ier* group, from whatever source this may have come, at the outset of the Old French period.

15. *Archivio glottologico italiano*, I, 484; IX, 381; X, 104.

16. *ZRP*, XII, 580.

17. "L'Évolution phonétique du suffixe *-arius* en Gaule," *Bausteine zur romanischen Philologie, Festgabe für A. Mussafia*, pp. 641-661; also *Romania*, XXXI, 481.

18. *Grammaire de l'ancien français*, pp. 48-49.

be more likely to follow the destinies of that class than to impose their own original Germanic phonological laws upon them; this supposition appears substantiated by the accent-shift whereby the original Germanic stress on the initial syllable is lost, to be replaced by a stress which follows Latin-Romance laws of accentuation (*Hlódhari* > *Ludhér*; *Théuderich* > *Thierrý*; *Húgun* > *Hugóne* > *Huón*, etc.). Between the fifth-century conquest of France by the Germanic invaders and the arising of the umlaut tendency in question, which most Germanic linguists seem disposed to place toward the beginning of the eighth century,¹⁹ the proper names which had joined the *-arius* class may be supposed to have achieved a certain stability within that class which removed them from the phonological tendencies of the mother-tongue. The point made by Thomas (page 659) that the few forms in Vulgar Latin documents which appear in this connection generally have *-ero*, not *-erio*,²⁰ undoubtedly militates against the Gröber-Marchot theory of a substitution of *-ëriu* for *-ariu*, but is not in itself a proof of Germanic umlaut influence, since the form *-ero* can be explained in other and perhaps more satisfactory ways, as will be seen below.

The above enumeration by no means exhausts the theories and combinations of theories that have been advanced in connection with French *-ier*, but presents the main currents of thought. It is also to be noted that several authorities decline to take a stand in the matter, and limit themselves to describing the development as abnormal.²¹

A new possibility that presents itself is that the suffix *-ariu*, in certain sections of France and in certain classes of words, may have been reduced to *-aru*, with loss of the *i* instead of transposition; that this *-aru*, in accordance with normal French phonological processes, may have developed into *-er*, with open *e*; and that this open *e*, at a time when diphthongization of stressed vowels was beginning, may have been partially confused with original free short stressed Latin *e*, and have diphthongized into *ie*, again in accordance with normal French phonological processes. The attraction by the stronger *-aru* type of the less

19. J. Schatz, *Althochdeutsche Grammatik*, p. 39; W. Waltemath, *Die fränkischen Elemente in der französischen Sprache*, pp. 47-48.

20. *Berhero*, not *Berherio*, in a document of 766; *sorcerus* and *paner* in the Glosses of Reichenau; 35 proper names in *-erus*, *-era* in the Polyptique d'Irminon, as against 600 forms in *-arius*, *-aria*, and only one form in *-erius*.

21. Bourciez, *Éléments de linguistique romane*, § 264 b; Zauner, *Romanische Sprachwissenschaft*, I, § 237; Schwan-Behrens, *Grammaire de l'ancien français*, § 56, 2; etc.

numerous and popular *-ëriu*, *-ēriu* classes, with or without previous reduction to **-ëru*, **-ēru*, may then be assumed.

The first part of this theory is by no means new. Marchot claims passage of *-ariu* to *-aru*, but thinks that subsequently *-aru* is replaced by *-ëru*. Zimmermann also supposes *-ariu* > *-aru*, but then accounts for *-ier* by the analogy of forms in which *i* or a palatal precedes the *a*. Since *-ariu* turns to *-aru* in a large section of the Romance field (*-ariu* > *-aio* in Tuscany, but > *-aro* in most dialects of northern and southern Italy;²² Roumanian forms in *-ar* also appear best explained as coming from *-aru*), there seems to be no good reason for disputing the possibility of *-ariu* > *-aru* on French soil as well. The fall of vowels in hiatus, which some linguists attempt to restrict to certain specific combinations, appears to be fairly general whenever the change from pure *i* or *u* to semivowels leads to combinations difficult to pronounce.²³ A list of Vulgar Latin forms in which *-aru* replaces *-ariu* is offered by Schuchardt²⁴ and repeated by Staaf,²⁵ who, however, refuses to admit that *-aru* may, in the course of time, have replaced *-ariu* everywhere (it may be remarked that it is not at all necessary to admit universal replacement; a partial tendency, in certain localities, suffices). The appearance of *-er* instead of *-ier* in several Old French manuscripts²⁶ is suggested by Cohn as partial proof of *-aru* for *-ariu* on northern French soil.

It may be well at this point to review the general evidence of the documents of the pre-French period in connection with the suffix *-ariu*. The conservation of this suffix is quite general. The forms in *-aru* cited by Schuchardt are nevertheless compelling (*cancellarus*, *carbonaru*,

22. Meyer-Lübke, *Grammaire*, § 521.

23. Cf. Grandgent, *Introduction to Vulgar Latin*, § 222-227; he offers not only *arietem* > *aretem*, *parietes* > *paretes*, *quietus* > *quetus*, *battuo* > *batto* and *coquo* > *coco*, but also *torqueo* > **torquo* > **torco*; Bourciez, *Éléments*, § 84, describes the tendency to drop *i* in *-eo* and *-io* verbs and offers **sento* and **dormo*; his suggestion that these forms may have been created by analogy of the other forms of the verb appears invalidated by the numerous other verbs in which this analogy does not take place, by his statement (§ 290 b) to the effect that in Provençal verbs in *-io* generally lose the *i*, and by his examples of double forms such as *au*, *auch*, *fau*, *fatz*, *cre*, *crei*. These double forms are of special interest because they show the tendency to drop *i* on Gallic soil, side by side, with the tendency to retain it. Additional Vulgar Latin forms in which *i* and *u* in hiatus are lost are reported by Muller & Taylor, *Chrestomathy of Vulgar Latin*, p. 37; particularly interesting because they show the fall of *i* before *u* in French territory are *sacerdotum* for *sacerdotium* (Gregory of Tours) and *homicidum* for *homicidium* (Frodebertus and Imporunus).

24. *Vokalismus*, II, 451.

25. *Op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

26. Chevalier—Roland; *primer—Passion de Sainte Catherine; encensers—Ami et Amile*; etc.; cf. also Zimmermann, p. 44.

casarus, cornicularus, tabellarius, Febraras, Ianuaras, etc.). As against these fairly numerous forms, we have a doubtful sixth-century *glanderia* (< *glandarius* + *-ia*?) reported by Grandgent.²⁷ Seventh and eighth-century texts indicate an overwhelming survival of *-ariu*, in Germanic proper names as well as in common nouns (*Theodaharius, Vualacharium, Chrodchario, Rotgarius, Chlodocharius* are a few specimens taken at random from Tardif's eighth-century *Monuments historiques*). The only form that affords evidence in favor of the transposition theory is Pirson's *concambitairas* for *concambitarias*;²⁸ this isolated occurrence may perhaps be ascribed to a slip of the pen. The interchange of *Amalgero* and *Amalgario* (year 679), reported by Vielliard,²⁹ and a similar case in Tardif (no. 68, year 770—*Hartgario*; no. 78, year 777—*Hartgero*) are admittedly doubtful because of the possibility of two different Germanic suffixes. *Berhero* for *Berhario* (year 766), and the Irminon Polyptique's 35 forms in *-ero, -era*, reported by Thomas,³⁰ are not at all in conflict with the theory of a passage from *-ariu* to *-aru* and then to *-eru, -er*, but rather support it (let us not forget, however, the 600 forms in *-arius, -aria*, also appearing in the Polyptique, indicating the strong vitality of the old suffix, which yields only occasionally to pronunciation difficulties, or the one form in *-erius*, which may display change of *a* to *e* in the original suffix; and let us also recall the probability that the two suffixes *-arius* and *-acus* were in the forefront of the change from *a* to *e*).³¹

As we advance to the dawn of the Romance period, we find *sorcerus* (for **sortiarius*) and *paner* in the Glosses of Reichenau. The Glosses, however, also contain at least 40 forms in *-arius* (*uolumptarius, berbicularius, carpentarii, panario, ostiarii, cellarius, lectarium, chaldaria, manaria, plumarii, incensarium, butillarius, focarias, arcarius*, etc.), which are generally disregarded by linguists who seek in documentary evidence only those phenomena which indicate change. As against these forms, *ministerium, ministerio, desiderium*, etc. seem to indicate no confusion between the *-ariu* and the *-eriu* suffixes. So far as *sorcerus* and *paner* are concerned, there appears to be no difficulty in deriving them from **sortiaru* and **panaru*.

27. *Introduction to Vulgar Latin*, § 39.

28. *Romanische Forschungen*, xxvi, 919.

29. *La Langue des diplômes royaux et chartes privées de l'époque mérovingienne*, pp. 3, 61.

30. Cf. also Cipriani, *Etude sur quelques noms propres d'origine germanique*, Angers, 1901.

31. Cf. Pei, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16, and Morel, *Etude sur la langue des chartes de Cluny, X^e siècle*, Ecole des Chartes, 1914, p. 77.

The Rhaeto-Romance (?) Glosses of Cassel show *sestar*, *caldaru* and *paioari*, all of which indicate origin from *-aru* forms, side by side with the conservative *siluarias* and with what appears to be a transposed development in *manneiras*.

Lastly, the *Ludher* (< *Hlodhari*) of the Oaths of Strasbourg indicates fair *-aru* possibilities.

If *-ariu* passed to *-aru*, wholly or partly, the question then arises whether the *a* of *-aru* could have turned into *e* with open quality, and whether the *ε* thus formed could have diphthongized to *ie*.

The controversy regarding the original sound of Old French *e* < Latin *a* need not be gone into in detail at this point.³² Considering the starting-point of the sound-shift, Böhmer's contention that the *e* arising from *a* was intermediate between *a* and *ε* seems more acceptable than Gaston Paris' hypothesis that it was extremely closed.³³ If the *e* resulting from Latin free *a* was originally, in the formative period of the language, an open one, as is the opinion of Böhmer, Schwan-Behrens, Bourciez and others, then the possibility, in that period of flux and uncertainty, of occasional confusion with *ε* from Latin *ē* appears likely, and this contention seems borne out by the earliest monuments of French.

An independent survey of assonances and forms in the oldest French literary works establishes the following points:³⁴

EULALIE

-ariu and *-ēriu* have fallen together and developed into *-ier*; the diphthong appears in assonance with *ie* < *ē* and with *ie* < palatal + *a*: 5-6: *conselliers:ciel*; 9-10: *pleier:menestier*; 25-26: *ciel:preier*. The fact that no assonance of this sound with *e* < *a* appears may be acci-

32. Cf. Meyer-Lübke, *Grammaire*, § 225, for the more important details; a distinction among the *e*'s arising in Old French from Latin *a*, from Latin *ē* and from Latin *ē* is claimed by Gaston Paris, *Saint Alexis*, p. 49 ff., by Böhmer, *Romanische Studien*, 1, 5, 599 ff., and by others; there is, however, absolutely no agreement as to the nature of the sounds, particularly that of *e* < *a*. As illustrations of the opinions of authorities, we may cite Bourciez, *Eléments*, § 263 a, who says that the primitive sound of *e* < *a* was undoubtedly a long, open *ε*; and Schwan-Behrens, § 35, § 52, § 211, who claim *a* > long *ε*, this, with the fall of final vowels, > closed *ē*.

33. Cf. Lücking, *Die ältesten französischen Mundarten*, Berlin, 1877, pp. 91-106, for a full description of the evidence, and for conclusions with which we can hardly agree.

34. References to the *Eulalie*, *Fragment*, *Passion* and *Léger* are to lines in Koschwitz's *Les Plus Anciens Monuments de la langue française*, Leipzig, 1913; references to the *Alexis* are to *laisses* in Förster & Koschwitz's *Altfranzösisches Übungsbuch*, Leipzig, 1915; references to the *Roland* are to *laisses* in T. A. Jenkins' *Chanson de Roland*, Heath, 1924.

dental, in a 29-line poem in which only one $e < a$ assonance occurs (17-18: *virginitet:honestet*).

FRAGMENT DE VALENCIENNES

Scanty evidence is to be derived from this document because of its fragmentary nature and lack of assonances. No -*ariu* or -*eriu* forms appear. 11: *cheve* and 29: *cherte* seem to indicate lack of diphthongization into *ie* of palatal + *a*. Of more definite interest are the forms 15: *eedre* (but 12, 17: *edre*) and 28: *peer*. If the former is interpreted as indicating the initial stage of diphthongization of $e < \text{free } \check{e}$, the same supposition would seem reasonable for the latter (the form *piers* appears in the *Léger*; cf. *infra*). But this would be a case of the diphthong *ie* arising from original Latin *a* not preceded by a palatal.

PASSION DU CHRIST

This poem is even more unsatisfactory, from the point of view of evidence, because of its Provençal admixture. A few forms in -*ariu*, rendered as -*er*, appear (38: *olivers*; 85: *deners*; 377: *primers*; 419: *primera*), while one is rendered as -*eir* (190: *useire*). The only form in assonance is *primers:pecchiad*, of which the French original is likely to have been *primiers:pechiet*, with equivalence of *ie < -ariu* and *ie < palatal + a*.

A few additional assonances appear which may indicate confusion of sounds; but not very much reliance can be placed in them in view of the linguistic mixture:

7-8: *deus:carnals*; if this represents *deus:charnels*, we have equivalence of $e < \check{e}$ and $e < a$ (but cf. *infra* for *deu*).

43-44: *mantens:pez*; if this represents *mantels:pez* or *piez*, we have equivalence of $e < \text{checked } \check{e}$ and e or *ie < free } \check{e}.*

105-106: *pietad:parler*; if this represents *pitiet:parler*, we have equivalence of *ie < palatal + a* and $e < a$ (but cf. *infra* for *pitiet*, *pitet*).

409-410: *anunciaz:oblidez*; if this represents *annunciez:oblidez*, we have equivalence of *ie < palatal + a* and $e < a$.

LÉGER

Here we find again the equivalence of *ie < } \check{e}, palatal + *a*, -*ariu* and -*eriu* that appears in the *Eulalie*: 5-6: *biens:lethgier*; 19-20: *peitiens:lothiers*; 65-66: *clergier:monstier*; 97-98: *voluntiers:monstier*; 103-104: *mistier:castier*.*

To this is added very frequent diphthongization of *e* < *a* without preceding palatal. This *ie* < *a* appears in assonance with *e* < *a*, and even with *a* (retained by learned or Provençal influence ?), but not with *ie* from other sources: 33-34: *caritet:veritiet*; 41-42: *laudiez:amet*; 59-60: *piers:gred*; 101-102: *miel:el*; 123-124: *miel:anatemaz*; 135-136: *miel:observer*; 141-142: *ciutat-miel*; 159-160: *vituperet:miels*; 171-172: *carnels:spiritiel*; 181-182: *restaurat:laudier*; 215-216: *spiritiel:perdonat*.

On the other hand, definite equivalence appears between *e* and *ie* < *ě*, -*ariu*, -*eriu* and palatal + *a*: 81-82: *mistier:ben*; 121-122: *bien:evesquet*; 157-158: *talier:queu*; 223-224: 1. (lethgier or lothier):*pez*; 229-230: *queu:pez*.

ie < palatal + checked *ě* is in assonance with *e* < checked *ě*: 179-180: *flaiel:seruu*; 193-194: *flaiel:laudebert*.

In the case of one word, *deu*, we find a strange equivalence to practically all possible values of *e* and *ie*:

ie < palatal + *a*: 147-148: *preier:deu*.

e < *a*: 201-202: *claritet:deu*.

e, *ie*, < *ě*: 207-208: *deus:ciel*; 237-238: *dominedeus:cel*.

The diphthongization into *ie* of *e* < *a* without preceding palatal is a striking characteristic of the *Léger*: 34: *veritiet*; 36: *humilitiet*; 172: *spiritiels*; 215: *spiritiel*; 65, 144, 207, etc.: *tiel* (as against 138: *tal*; 73: *tel*, etc.); 59: *piers*; 161, 169: *parlier*; 167, 184: *porlier*; 129, 160, etc.: *miels* (as against 114: *mala*); 101, 123, 135, 144, etc.: *miel*; 162, 168: *laudier*; 41: *laudiez*.

Non-diphthongization of *e* < free *ě* or palatal + *a* is also frequent, but not to the same degree: 82: *ben*; 122: *evesquet*; 158, 229: *queu*; 148, 202: *deu*; 207, 237: *deus*; 238: *cel*; 224, 230: *pez*; etc.

The diphthongization of *e* < *a* without preceding palatal is far from being without parallel in later documents, as will be seen below. Its extreme frequency in the *Léger*, however, has elicited comment from various sources. Diez³⁵ calls attention to the phenomenon, but makes no attempt to explain it; he is somewhat in favor of the theory that the poem may have originated in Poitou; Champollion-Figeac³⁶ had already suggested Limousin or Poitou, while Du Méril³⁷ had suggested Normandy. Suchier³⁸ claims Walloon origin, but is controverted by

35. *Zwei altromanische Gedichte*, Bonn, 1852.

36. *Documents historiques inédits*, Paris, 1841-1848, IV, 446.

37. *Essai philosophique sur la formation de la langue française*, Paris, 1852, p. 414.

38. *ZRP*, II, 255.

Gaston Paris,³⁹ who rejects all preceding ideas, including that of Poitevin and that of a mixture of French and Provençal, and claims Autun in Burgundy as the most probable home of the *Léger* original; in connection with the diphthongization into *ie* of *e* < *a*, Paris points out that *ie* appears also for *ei* (23-24: *savier:fied*; 53-54: *fiet:rei*), and suggests that the apparent *ie* < *a* is nothing but an error on the part of a Bourguignon scribe who is attempting to render the *ei*-sound of his own dialect (but *ie* appears also for original long *i*: 139-140: *civ:asalier*). Lücking⁴⁰ also attempts to explain the forms in *ie* < *a* on the theory of scribal error, but prefers the view that the scribe is a Provençal attempting to render French sounds.

It may be added, in connection with the problem of diphthongization in the *Léger*, that *ie* appears very frequently in the demonstrative adjective-pronouns (20, 49, 56, etc.: *ciel*; 13, 32, etc.: *ciels*; 207: *ciest*; etc.; forms with the normal *e* are slightly more numerous). The identical phenomenon (*ciest*, *cieste*) appears in a Bourguignon (Côte-d'Or) document of 1278, offered by Schwan-Behrens,⁴¹ who advance no explanation whatsoever for it. And while it is perhaps unsafe to advance the evidence of modern dialects in connection with the developments of the Old French period, it may be remarked that diphthongized forms of the demonstrative appear today in various sections.⁴² The point is not relevant in connection with *e* or *ie* < *a*, but does indicate that it is perhaps unwise to refer to scribal errors all forms in the older documents which do not fit in with rigid so-called "phonological laws."

ALEXIS

Equivalence of *e* or *ie* < free *ě*, -*ariu*, -*eriu*, palatal + *a* appears:
11: *anuitet:colcer:ciel:corocier:muiler*; 25: *anterciet:ciel:provenders:*
almosners:liez; 36: *muster:antercier:set:ciel:esluiner*; etc.

In the case of two words, *eret* (or *ieret*) and *deu*, *e*, *ie* < free *ě* is in assonance with *e* < *a*: 4: *pedre:ieret:emperere:honurede:cuntretha*; 18: *ciptet:parler:deu:salvetet:deu*; 34: *afermet:citied:parler:alter:deu*; 48: *medra:espusede:aviserent:demandarent:eret*; 76: *aneret:esculterent:medre:eret:truvede*; 109: *volentet:oneuret:citet:deu:aluez*.

39. *Romania*, I, 273 ff.; VII, 629.

40. *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

41. *Op. cit.*, III, 54-56.

42. *Cieutx*—Mathanvilliers, Brezolles, Perche—Herzog, *Neuf französische Dialekttexte*, Leipzig, 1914, pp. 60-61; *thieu*, *thielle*, *thiés*—Niort, Poitou—Herzog, p. 53; *tyet*, *kyet* and similar forms—Vendée, Deux-Sèvres, Vienne, Charente, Charente Inférieure, Gironde—*Atlas linguistique*, p. 44.

Gaston Paris points out in his study of the *Alexis* that *deu* and *eret*, despite their original *ě*, join the *e < a*. We have seen in the *Léger*, however, that *deu* is in assonance on the one hand with *e < a* (*claritet*), on the other with *ie < palatal + a* (*preier*), and with *e, ie < free ě* (*ciel, cel*).

In one *laisse*, 65, we have the equivalence of *e < a* with *e < checked ě*: *set* (< *sapit*):*alet:aprester:menestrels:set*.

Diphthongization of *e < a* without preceding palatal appears occasionally in the *Alexis*: 34: *citied*; 21: *citiet*; Introduction: *trinitiet*; Appendix: *asemblier. Citiet*, in 21, in assonance with *medra, espusethe, alet, demenet*, appears in contrast with *citet*, in 118, which is in assonance with *parez, poser, poestet* and *atarger*. *Atarger* itself is a form in which *ie < palatal + a* should have developed, and which should not be in assonance with *e < a*, if the distinction between the two sounds were a clear-cut one at this period.

Fairly frequently, diphthongization fails to occur in *e < free ě, -ariu, -eriu*, palatal + *a*: Introduction: *amistet*; 11: *colcer*; *muiler*; 25: *provenders, almosners*; 36: *set* (< *sedet*); 76: *eret* (as against 4: *ieret*); 52: *volenters* (as against 68: *volentiers*).

Lücking's conclusion⁴³ is that, just as the scribe of the *Léger* is a Provençal who does not know how to render French sounds, so also the scribe of the Lambsprunge *Alexis* is an Anglo-Saxon whose ignorance of French is responsible for his errors. If this view is correct, it is indeed unfortunate that so many of the few early monuments of the French language should have come down to us in the versions of non-Frenchmen who were unacquainted with the language in which they were writing.

ROLAND

The customary equivalence of *ie < free ě, -ariu, -eriu*, palatal + *a* appears: III: *chevaliers:aidier:fier:amistiez:chiens:bien*, etc.; VIII: *liez:chevalier:vergier:fiers:enseignier*, etc.; XXXVI: *tient:nies:otreier:liiez:destrier:somier*, etc.; CXXXI: *chastiier:Oliviers:mestier:mielz:vangier:liet:somiers:pitiet:mostiers*, etc.

Deu, despite its original *ě*, is in assonance with *e < a*. A form *chevaler* (instead of *chevalier*) also appears in *e < a* assonance: IX: *parlet:deu:adorer:doner:deu:penser*, etc.; XXVII: *ostel:recouvrer:fermez:damnedeu:chevaler:per*, etc.; CCIII: *entrez:plorer:aler:chevaler:champels:ber*, etc.

43. *Op. cit.*, pp. 73-75.

e < *a* appears in *ie* assonance in CCXLIII: *fieres:brisiedes:chrestiene:jostede:otriede*, etc.

In XL we find both *e* and *ie* < palatal + *a* in *e* < *a* assonance: *parler:passet:mendistet:osteier:tels:ber:barnet*, etc., while the very next *laisse*, XLI, shows us *osteier* and *mendistiet* in their more normal *ie* < *ě*, *-ariu*, *-eriu*, palatal + *a* assonance: *merveillier:vielz:mielz:travaillet:mendistiet:osteier:nies:ciel:chevaliers*, etc.

Bocler and *bachelor* (< **bucculare*, **baccalare*, or < **bucculariu*, **baccalariu* ?) both appear. The second is not in assonance, while the first is in *e* < *a* assonance: CXLVI: *ber:boclers:desmembrer:oblider:per:jostez*, etc. Both these words appear in later works with the *-ier* ending.

Other cases of hesitation between *e* and *ie* forms appear, in addition to the *chevaler-chevalier* and *mendistet-mendistiet* mentioned above. *Pitet* (not in assonance; LXVI) is in contrast with *pitiet* (in *ie* assonance; CXXXI, CLXII). Four forms with apparent *ie* < *a* without preceding palatal appear: *seiet* (< *setatu*; not in assonance; CXXXI); *ormier* (< *aure mare* (?);⁴⁴ in regular *ie* assonance; VIII, CIII, CXVII, CLXXXIV); *iriez, iriet* (< *iratu*; in regular *ie* assonance; CXVII, CLX, CLXXXVI); *destorbier* (for *destorber*; in regular *ie* assonance; CIII).

The general conclusions to which we are led by the evidence at our disposal are the following:

The *e* or *ie* arising out of *ě*, *-ariu*, *-eriu* and palatal + *a* are equal. They do not, for the most part, coincide with *e* or *ie* < *a* without preceding palatal. There are, however, enough instances of coincidence to indicate a certain amount of confusion in pronunciation.

The entire matter of diphthongization of *e* into *ie*, from whatever source the *e* may come (free *ě*, *-ariu*, *-eriu*, *a* with or without preceding palatal) appears to be in a state of flux up to the eleventh century, with ultimate standardization fairly, but not completely, established by the time of the *Roland*.

Forms in which *e* < *ě*, *-ariu*, *-eriu*, palatal + *a* does not diphthongize are numerous; equally numerous are forms in which *ie* develops from *a* without preceding palatal. Both phenomena appear too often and in too many works to be explained away by the theory of scribal error. It would appear that for the forms in question we must either admit

44. But cf. for this form J. D. M. Ford, *Speculum*, II (1927), 97, who claims derivation from *aurum merum*, and also disputes the reading *chevaler* of *laisses* XXVII and CCIII, preferring *bachelor*.

confusion and hesitation in pronunciation, or start from two different original bases for each word, one with, the other without *i*; which, far from contradicting the first hypothesis, simply pushes it back into the pre-French period. Confusion and hesitation in pronunciation, particularly in a period of linguistic instability, are not surprising phenomena. We need only refer to the evidence of the *Roland*, at the end of the period in question, for a most clear-cut example of such confusion: the orthographic diphthong *ai* appears sometimes in *a* assonances, indicating the diphthongal value of *á* + *i* (*laisses* XX, LVIII, LX, LXVII, LXXXVI, CLXXI); at other times in *e* < checked *ě* assonances, indicating the monophthongal value of *i* (IV, XLVI, LIII, LXXV, CVIII, CXXVII, CLVI, CLXVI, CLXVII, CLXXXI, CCVIII).

The earliest monuments of French are not the only ones in which *ie* < *a* without preceding palatal appears. *Pier* < *pare* is to be found elsewhere than in the *Léger*;⁴⁵ so also *tiel*.⁴⁶ *Pieu* < *palu*, which survives to the present day, is reported by Gamillscheg⁴⁷ as early as the twelfth century (are we quite certain that the explanation offered by Schwan-Behrens, § 211, is the correct one, and that diphthongization of *e* set in only after the change of *l* to *u* in such forms as *pieu*, *tieus*, *ostieus*, when we consider the *miel*, *tiel* and *spiritiel* of the *Léger*?). The dialectal versions of the Sermons of Maurice de Sully present frequent occurrences of *parlier*, *beautié*, *chantié*, *abbié*, *appelliez*, *passiez*, *estié*, *quiel*, etc., as against *volunters*, *encensers*, *noer*, *premere*.⁴⁸

The evidence seems to point to a tendency toward diphthongization of *e* < *a* without preceding palatal (whatever its pronunciation may have been). That this phenomenon may in origin have been dialectal, and have spread irregularly, attaching itself more definitely to certain forms and suffixes and dropping out of others as the language became more standardized, there appears to be no special reason to dispute.⁴⁹

In conclusion, our supposition is that *-ariu* turned to *-aru*; that *-aru* absorbed *-ëriu*, *-ēriu* (or that, after *-ëriu* had absorbed *-ēriu* and lost its *i*, the two forms, *-aru* and *-ëru*, coincided by reason of the normal French change of *a* > *e*, occurring while original *ě* still remained undiphthongized); and that the new *-eru*, with open *e*, passed on to *-ier* by confusion with *ē* < *ě*. As for Provençal forms in *-er*, *-ier*, *-eir*, they

45. Ben. D. de Norm., II, 17402; Foulques Fitz Warin, *Nouv. fr. du XIV^e s.*, p. 48.

46. Renclus de Moil. *Clarté*, IX, 5; *Chron. de S. Den.*, ms. *Ste-Gen.*, f. 55^d v^o; Oresme; and cf. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire*, s. v.

47. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der französischen Sprache*, s. v.

48. Cf. P. Meyer, *Romania*, v, 466 ff.

49. For hesitation in the matter of diphthongization in widely different languages and periods, cf. Salverda de Grave, *Neophilologus*, XI (1936), 262.

may be taken as borrowings from the neighboring French districts, in which the diphthongization tendency appears to have been strongest; true Provençal development from *-ariu* > *-aru* > *-ar* being represented by forms like *bacalar*, *bachalar*, *cavalar*, and by *clara*, *glara* (< *glarea*), which has no counterpart in *e*, *ie* or *ei*.

A special word is in order concerning the *el* (: *miel*, *Léger*, 102), *eil* (: *mener:plurer:consirrer:aturnet*, *Alexis*, 49; manuscripts other than the Lambsprunge have *el*), *el* (*Roland*, CCXLIV, not in assonance; XCII, CCXI, in *e* < *a* assonance). This form, which should have come from *aliud*, vulgarized to **alium*, is, because of its development, derived from **ale*. It is true that a Latin *alis*, *alid* exists; its survival, however, is doubtful. Could *el* indicate a development from *aliu* with fall of *i*, in contrast with French *aïl* < *alium*? If so, the contrast between **premer*, *premier* < *primariu* and *vair* < *variū* would have, if not an explanation, at least a parallel.

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REVIEWS

Histoire littéraire de la France. Par des MEMBRES DE L'INSTITUT. Tome XXXVII: *Suite du quatorzième siècle.* Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1938. Pp. xxiv + 562.

Cet ouvrage commencé par des bénédictins et continué par des académiciens des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres n'est pas vraiment une histoire mais une bibliothèque, un inventaire de l'écrit du moyen âge. L'entreprise compte à ce jour deux siècles environ et trente-sept imposants volumes. L'éditeur du présent volume est M. Mario Roques; les autres collaborateurs en sont MM. Antoine Thomas, Henri Omont, Paul Fournier, Charles-Victor Langlois, Alfred Coville et Alfred Jeanroy.

Le tome s'ouvre par trois notices sur des collaborateurs décédés, Ch. Langlois en 1929, Paul Fournier et Antoine Thomas en 1935. De ces trois disparus, Langlois et Thomas touchent le plus directement à nos intérêts. Mais Paul Fournier, historien éminent du droit canonique et de la théologie, avait là une de ces "spécialités" dont la part est immense dans toute la vie culturelle du moyen âge. Il fait l'objet d'une belle notice par M. Coville et sa contribution au tome xxxvii représente presque la moitié du volume (pages 1-209). Elle comprend, entre autres, une étude sur Durand de Saint-Pourçain, cet adversaire de Saint-Thomas et qui rouvrit, avec originalité, la vieille querelle des réalistes et des nominaux; sur le cardinal Pierre Bertrand, théologien et juriste qui marqua aux conférences de Vincennes en 1329; sur le dominicain Pierre de la Palu qui fut patriarche de Jérusalem; sur le canoniste, fameux en son temps, Henri Bohic et sur les deux papes français Jacques Fournier qui fut Benoît XII et Pierre Roger qui fut Clément VI, pape d'Avignon et patron de Pétrarque.

Quant à Ch. Langlois, dont la mort remonte à plus de dix ans, il a fourni, avec quatre notices succinctes, une étude sur *Barthélémy de Bruges, maître ès arts et en médecine*. Dans les deux volumes précédents et alors qu'il était l'éditeur plein de scepticisme et d'abnégation de l'entreprise, sa collaboration avait été plus importante. Il y avait manifesté ses admirables qualités de bibliographe à propos de François de Meyrones et de Nicolas de Lyre. Ch. Langlois aimait à traiter en grand savant de petits sujets et il avait conscience de l'honneur qu'il leur faisait ainsi. Mais il restait—heureusement—l'auteur de la belle série des quatre volumes sur la société médiévale d'après les sources littéraires. Et sa préoccupation essentielle ressort dans une brève notice du présent tome sur Simon de Vauvert, auteur du *Sertum Floram*: "L'opuscule de Simon, s'il n'est pas ennuyeux, n'est pas instructif pour nous, parce qu'il est trop savant; on n'y trouve guère d'historiettes relatives aux choses du temps où il a été composé."

La notice de M. Coville sur Ch. Langlois traite avec atticisme un sujet qui était comme le caractère même du personnage, beau mais difficile.

M. Coville lui-même a fourni à ce volume une contribution très importante (pages 250 à 412). Il étudie d'abord *Gilles li Muisis, abbé de Saint-Martin de Tournai, chroniqueur et moraliste*. Il ne surfait certes point les qualités du chroniqueur et le laisse bien au-dessous de Jean le Bel et de Froissart. Mais il apprécie en lui des vertus de pondération et de scrupule. Quant au poète, c'est surtout en un temps où il était devenu presque aveugle qu'il s'était mis à composer ses vers moraux et satiriques. Gilles n'est pas—tant s'en faut!—un bon poète et Ch. Langlois qui l'a exploité dans sa série pour des traits de mœurs le trouvait "écoeurant" à la longue. Mais M. Coville lui rend justice pour les qualités de verve alerte qu'il manifeste çà et là. Témoin ce distique où il parle par ouï-dire (puisqu'il est aveugle) des femmes qui se maquillent:

*Se me dit on comment les aucunes se fardent,
Se mettent dou rouget, si sanle (semble) qu'elles
argent (brûlent).*

M. Coville à la suite de son Gilles li Muisis donne un fort article sur des *Ecrits contemporains sur la Peste de 1348 à 1350*. Dans ces documents médicaux, poétiques, épistolaires et liturgiques ici classés et analysés avec une netteté remarquable, l'astrologie tient une grande place tandis que les prescriptions ou observations sur l'hygiène mentale brillent par leur absence. Cela changera sous la Renaissance avec un Symphorien Champier et un Rabelais qui feront de la sérénité et gaieté de l'esprit le grand préventif de l'épidémie. Relevons, comme une petite notule sur l'esthétique littéraire du moyen âge, l'excuse que Simon de Couvin, un des poètes de la peste, nous fait de la platitude de ses vers:

*Et les termes de médecine
De diverse sorte et racine
Sont trop merveilleux et divers
A faire rime et jolis vers.*

Les *Documents sur les Flagellants* dont M. Coville nous donne un relevé et une analyse (pages 390-411) se rattachent à la peste car cette étrange épidémie de mortification collective fut provoquée par l'appréhension et l'approche du fléau. C'est surtout dans un sermon de Jean de Fayt, prononcé à Avignon le 5 octobre 1349 devant Clément VI, que se trouvent les détails les plus précis sur la secte. Jean de Fayt réprouve les Flagellants comme pervers et hérétiques. Il les accuse entre autres excès d'inciter au massacre des Juifs. Or il ne faut pas, dit-il, tuer les Juifs car l'Eglise catholique croit qu'à la fin du monde ils seront convertis au Christ.

L'autre collaborateur défunt, Antoine Thomas, est l'objet d'une notice par son ami M. Jeanroy qu'on ne peut lire sans émotion si on a approché cet homme si approchable, dont l'esprit rigoureux était si ouvert. Jamais plus grand

savant ne fut plus simple avec plus de noblesse candide. Thomas laisse un grand nom dans l'histoire de la langue et, comme dit M. Roques, du mot réel, du mot vivant, mais l'histoire littéraire et l'histoire tout court lui doivent plus qu'on ne peut encore dire. A ce tome xxxvii il a donné un article sur *Frère Jean Acart, poète français* et une série d'études sur des *Traductions françaises de la Consolatio Philosophiae de Boèce* (pages 412-470), série que M. Roques a poursuivie dans le même volume.

Jean Acart, un religieux du pays calésien, a composé en 1332 un poème narratif et lyrique en 1951 vers, *l'Amoureuse Prise* dont le thème est une chasse à la meute qu'Amour lance contre l'Amant. M. E. Hoepfner a édité ce poème il y a une trentaine d'années, en a démêlé les sources et défini l'originalité, selon lui réelle. Originale ou non, cette production ne brille pas d'un vif éclat, mais la structure des ballades et rondeaux qui y sont contenus présage par sa variété la révolution technique de Guillaume de Machaut.

Bien plus importante est l'étude que Thomas a faite de huit traductions françaises de la *Consolatio*. On sait le prestige insigne dont jouit durant le moyen âge, à partir du neuvième siècle surtout, cette œuvre d'ailleurs si belle. Thomas que la question préoccupait depuis vingt ans se proposait de passer en revue les traductions françaises depuis le début du treizième siècle jusqu'au milieu du quatorzième. La troisième des œuvres qu'il rencontre sur sa route est la traduction en prose de Jean de Meun laquelle est en somme restée inédite. (La Pierpont Morgan Library en possède un très beau MS. Et, ici même, Dedeck Héry, en avril 1936, en a publié un fragment par lui trouvé dans le MS latin 8654 B de la Nationale.) A la suite d'Ernest Langlois, l'éditeur du *Roman de la Rose*, Thomas établit que c'est bien là la traduction que Jean de Meun dédia au roi de France, Philippe IV. Il y aurait beaucoup à dire sur ce problème qui n'en est vraiment plus un. La question de la paternité de Jean de Meun a été brouillée par plusieurs raisons¹ dont une est bonne à relever ici: d'éminents érudits comme Paul Meyer n'ont pas compris que le poète Jean de Meun n'ait pas traduit en vers au moins les vers de la *Consolatio*. Mais surtout ils n'ont vu dans l'œuvre en question qu'un pur mot à mot alors que la préface promettait une certaine liberté de retrancher et d'ajouter. Or, il n'est que de lire ladite traduction pour voir que l'auteur ne s'est pas constamment asservi à la lettre du latin. Mais quoi? Des gens qui savent beaucoup de choses oublient parfois de savoir lire.²

C'est par une étude sur la *Traduction en vers, par Renaud de Louhans*,

1. Il existe deux traductions concurrentes en prose et en vers dont l'une s'est arrogé la dédicace au roi. Il y a aussi une traduction en vers dont l'auteur anonyme déclare avoir été allié à Meun. Mais, pour des raisons de langue, Thomas rejette ce quidam fort au Nord et à l'est de Meun sur Loire et suggère de voir en Meun une faute de copiste pour *Menin*, ville de la Belgique actuelle, sur la Lys.

2. Rappelons que c'est la traduction en prose de Jean de Meun que Chaucer a prise pour base—en même temps que l'original latin—pour sa traduction anglaise. Cf. dans cette *RR*, VIII (1917), l'article de John L. Lowes sur *Chaucer's Boethius and Jean de Meun* et de la même année le livre de Bernard L. Jefferson sur *Chaucer and the Consolatio*.

Frère Prêcheur que M. Roques poursuit la série interrompue par la mort du vieux maître. Cette œuvre qui a ses mérites a joui d'un succès marqué jusqu'au quinzième siècle. Mais son auteur, Renaud de Louhans, a donné occasion, sans le savoir, à un quiproquo étrange déjà éclairci par Léopold Delisle mais que M. Roques débrouille à nouveau avec une alerte sûreté: un acrostiche méconnaissable dans un MS de la bibliothèque Colbert a fait de Renaud de Louhans, qui écrivait à Poligny en Franche Comté, un fabuleux *Gad de Oucieu* et, par dessus le marché, un Polonais!

A ce même Renaud appartient aussi *Le Livre de Mélibée et de Prudence* par lui adapté du latin d'Albertano de Brescia, moraliste italien du XIII^e siècle. L'étude que M. Roques fait du *Livre de Mélibée* est, pour nous, une des plus intéressantes de tout le recueil. Voici pourtant une difficulté dans l'interprétation de la véritable *signifiance* du thème: Mélibée, homme jeune, riche, puissant a vu trois ennemis pénétrer par effraction dans sa demeure, malmené sa femme, porter à sa fille cinq graves blessures. Il veut courir à sa vengeance avec ses voisins et amis qui l'y excitent encore. Mais sa femme s'appelle Prudence et elle lui donne les conseils qu'on peut bien donner avec un nom pareil. Elle le persuade de ne pas écouter des conseils téméraires, de ne pas agir à la chaude mais plutôt de se réconcilier avec ses ennemis. Il le fait et tout le monde s'en trouve bien. Or, M. Roques incline à donner de ces "trois ennemis" et de ces "cinq blessures" une interprétation symbolique. Les trois ennemis en particulier seraient Caro, Mundus et Dyabolus. Tout ceci semble d'abord fort naturel. Mais à la réflexion il est difficile de croire qu'Albertano et Prudence aient jamais prêché la *réconciliation* avec des ennemis pareils. Dyabolus surtout fait à cela une difficulté... du diable!

La notice de M. Roques au sujet de trois fragments d'un *Poème sur la guerre de Châlon* est un modèle d'acribologie. L'auteur du poème est de toute évidence un compatriote et un contemporain de Renaud de Louhans. Serait-ce point Renaud lui-même? Du Verdier (suivi par Loïs Gollut qui nous a conservé les fragments) l'a dit. L'attribution paraît plausible à M. Roques mais non les raisons que du Verdier a cru avoir de la faire. Au reste plus mauvaises encore (et ceci est bien vrai) les raisons que le bisontin Charles Weiss avance contre Renaud. En somme (et ceci soit dit pour le pauvre du Verdier) on a tort d'avoir raison si on ne donne pas de bonnes raisons pour la raison qu'on a.

C'est un peu cette austère leçon qui se dégage des travaux de l'*Histoire littéraire* où le furètement patient de l'erreur et de l'à peu près est plus visible que l'espoir de vérité. Feu Ch. V. Langlois, vers la fin de sa belle et laborieuse vie, a jugé cette magnifique entreprise avec un certain scepticisme par lequel il faisait encore valoir son abnégation. Il regardait l'*Histoire littéraire* comme condamnée à un certain disparate. Mais il concluait qu'elle devait malgré tout rester ce qu'elle était. Ce final acte de foi d'un grand douteur est parfaitement justifié par l'importance, par l'intérêt et, sur plus d'un point,

par la nouveauté de ce volume XXXVII. On y trouve "des études approfondies, sans équivalent ailleurs." Et c'est là une puissante raison d'être.

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LOUIS CONS

Lope de Vega's *El palacio confuso*, Together with a Study of the *Menaechmi* Theme in Spanish Literature. By CHARLES HENRY STEVENS. New York, Instituto de las Españas, 1939. Pp. xcii + 138.

Agustín de Rojas' *El natural desdichado*. Edited from an Autograph in the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid, with an Introduction and Notes. By JAMES WHITE CROWELL. New York, Instituto de las Españas, 1939. Pp. lxxi + 201.

The two books under review, listed in the order of publication, are doctoral dissertations, the first having been presented at New York University in 1937, the second at Cornell University in 1929. In his Introduction, Dr. Stevens presents a brief survey of the development of the *Menaechmi* theme—of which the play edited by him is an offshoot—from its obscure origin in Greek drama and the first extant treatment of it, in Plautus's *Menaechmi*, through the various Italian and Spanish derivations in the Renaissance down to *El palacio confuso* and other seventeenth-century Spanish works. *El palacio confuso* does not, like the other modern works, beginning with Cardinal Bibbiena's *Calandra*, deal with twins who are brother and sister, but with twin brothers. In this respect it is closer to the original theme, though its plot is entirely different from that of Plautus's play. Whether one should go so far, however, as Dr. Stevens does and see in the Spanish play reminiscences of the *Menaechmi* or of Timoneda's free rendering of the latter, *Los Menemnos*, which is here called "the principal point of departure for the inspiration of *El palacio confuso*" (page xxiv), is very much open to question, so tenuous are the resemblances. Nor is there sufficient evidence in the similarities pointed out between the play and other seventeenth-century Spanish works of drama and fiction to posit any direct relationship, as Dr. Stevens himself admits (page xxx). On the other hand he might have mentioned one minor work, which though not related to his play, is of interest as representing still another Spanish variation on the *Menaechmi* theme; I refer to Tirso's treatment *a lo divino*, in the *auto sacramental*, *Los hermanos parecidos*.

In listing the various bibliographical and critical references to *El palacio confuso*, Dr. Stevens has overlooked among the earlier authorities Fajardo, though the latter's comment was available in Rennert's Bibliography. More serious, in view of the attempt later in the Introduction to prove Lope's authorship of the work, is the failure to note the recent authoritative opinion of Professor Anibal: "The parentage of *El palacio confuso* is still doubtful, there being no determining evidence except the style, which has much that is most characteristic of Mira in his plays of intrigue . . ." (*Mira de Amescua*, Columbus, 1925, p. 160). Before coming to the problem of authorship, Dr.

Stevens completes the bibliographical picture by making a careful analysis of the relations between the five early editions of the play. Something might have been said about the value of the recent edition by Cotarelo (*Obras de Lope de Vega*, Nueva edicion, viii).

In dealing with the question of authorship, Dr. Stevens was confronted with two conflicting attributions. The earliest reference to the play, in the Almella inventory of 1628, gives Mira de Amescua as the author. The earliest dated text, in the *Parte veynte y ocho de comedias de varios autores*, Huesca, 1634, names Lope. The earliest *suelta*, which possibly dates from 1634-1638, attributes the play to Mira. None of these attributions may be considered as having much authority; the Huesca volume contains seven other plays which it ascribes to Lope, but of these, two are definitely not his, and two may not be his. Judging by Dr. Stevens's Bibliography, which lists only four comedias of Mira and fifty by Lope, it is evident that he has not treated the attributions with equal seriousness. Most of his discussion of the problem is, in fact, limited to a consideration of the similarities in plot, situation, character names, ideas and expression between *El palacio confuso* and various Lopean plays. We are shown, for example, how in several of his comedias, Lope displays an acquaintance with the history of Sicily, as does the author of *El palacio confuso*. In two of the Lopean plays—*La burlas de amor* and *Las burlas veras*—a young queen of Sicily is sought in marriage, as in *El palacio confuso*, by a young man who is unaware of his royal birth until it is revealed by an old tutor. In two other plays by Lope—*Don Juan de Castro*, Parts I and II—though the action is not laid in Sicily, there are two step-brothers so similar in appearance, that, like the twins in *El palacio confuso*, one can and does pass for the other. In these two comedias, as in *El palacio confuso*, confusion arises from this situation, and various persons, upon suspecting or learning the truth, express surprise at the miracle wrought by Nature. Dr. Stevens sees in all this proof of a common author. "Were these three plays," he says, "not the work of one man, it would be very strange that a second dramatist should be able to catch a trend of thought so similar and yet so illusive as is found here" (page lvi). But is the thought so illusive and are not the observations of the surprised individuals what one might expect in any author of the period? To my mind, neither the foregoing similarities nor those that are subsequently pointed out concerning sentiments, ideas, incident, plot and other particulars, warrant the assumption that "all our evidence, voluminous, detailed and at times somewhat inconclusive, indicates that it was Lope de Vega who composed *El palacio confuso*" (page lxxiv). For, how much such evidence might not be found in other contemporary dramatists? We are not told. Dr. Stevens has apparently not even looked for it very much in the other candidate for authorship, Mira de Amescua. I am not aware that Mira has any plays similar in plot or situation to *El palacio confuso*, but we can find in Mira a number of ideological and verbal parallels with this

play. To take but one example, compare the following descriptions of swimmers. In *El palacio confuso* we read:

Globos de nieve formaua
entre [los] azules campos
adonde forman los vientos
promontorios de Alauastro. (ll. 305-308)

Note the same kind of stylized description, even to some extent the same vocabulary, in these lines from Mira's *El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha*:

Otra vez pasando el Tigris
en sus ondas de alabastro
me vi perdido, y rompiendo
globos de nieve, en sus brazos
me sacó a la margen verde. (ll. 1754-1758)

I am not suggesting that such parallels, even if multiplied many times, would establish Mira's right to *El palacio confuso*. Rather I would emphasize the inadequacy of the method for determining the authorship of doubtful comedias. As a method it has little if any more validity than a subjective impression, and on a subjective basis I am of the opinion that *El palacio confuso* is not Lope's, either in the treatment of its material or in language. Until conclusive evidence is adduced, the authorship must remain in doubt.¹

More successful is Dr. Steven's attempt to arrive at the approximate date of composition of *El palacio confuso*. By considering the history of the theatrical company which first produced the play, by comparing the versification with Lope's practice as set forth by Buchanan and others, and by utilizing a piece of internal evidence, he concludes that the *comedia* was written in the period 1619-1624. If, as I suspect, the play is not Lope's, the argument on the basis of versification carries no weight. However, the remaining evidence is sufficient to allow us to accept the dates proposed.

The text of the play as reproduced here is based on the *Parte veynte y ocho* edition, but substitutes the variant readings of other editions when they are obviously preferable. I have noted only one misprint, "den" for "dan" in line 104. As indicated in the passage quoted above, "los" has been omitted in line 306. Why preserve the spelling "conuoquo" (line 929), if that is the way it appears in the *Parte* text? Lines 2986-3003 should be given to Barlovento, not to Carlos. One instance of poor punctuation affects the interpretation of the text; the beginning of lines 233 ff. should read: "¿A quién digo? Yo me llamo" etc. A few new emendations have been made by the editor, in the case of lines too short or otherwise faulty. One or two of the emendations seem questionable. If "llora" (line 2447) is to be replaced, "adoro" would seem better than "adora." "Cuerda" has been added to line 2143, which was lacking two syllables. It is much more likely, however, that, in keeping

1. Since the above was written, Professors S. G. Morley and C. Bruerton have shown that certain features of the versification of *El palacio confuso* "all prove that Lope was not the author," cf. *The Chronology of Lope de Vega's 'Comedias'*, New York, 1940, p. 321.

with the thought and structure of the sentence, the line ended in "pierda." This would result in the rhyming of "pierda" with itself, but such rhymes, as is well known, occur in the *siglo de oro* drama. At any rate, whatever the original reading, it can hardly have been, as emended, "la vida cuerda," or, as suggested in the Notes (page 117), "la razón la vida muerda." The Notes offer, on the whole, a good deal of useful commentary on certain words and passages. Since the editor assumes the play to be by Lope, he might have included, in connection with the scene in which Carlos takes Enrico for a ghost, some reference to those Lopean plays that present *figuras de ultratumba* (cf. J. F. Montesinos, ed. *El Marqués de las Navas*, Madrid, 1925, p. 138 ff.). Finally it would have facilitated the use of the Notes if the annotated lines had been marked with an asterisk. An outline of the plot and an index of the Introduction and Notes would have been useful.

Students of Spain's classic drama will welcome Dr. Crowell's edition of *El natural desdichado*, by Agustín de Rojas, for, except for some portions of it made available some years ago by Paz y Melia, this autograph has until now remained unpublished. Although of little merit as a piece of dramatic literature, it is nevertheless of interest as the only extant play by the man who has given us, in another work, *El viaje entretenido*, the most important contemporary account of the Spanish theatre at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Dr. Crowell chose a less ambitious task than the editor of the preceding volume. He has attempted no survey of any special field of the drama, nor has he undertaken the difficult problem of proving the authorship of a work. His Introduction is limited to a consideration of what is known of Rojas's life, a brief outline of Rojas's two other works, a description of the autograph of *El natural desdichado*, a few pages of criticism on the play and a résumé of the plot. The account of Rojas's life, based on the investigations of Pérez Pastor and Alonso Cortés and on various details culled from Rojas's two other works, provides the most complete picture we have had of the writer. The discussion of Rojas's two other works—*El viaje entretenido* and *El buen repúblico*—is very brief, but a more detailed study of them, since it apparently would not have yielded anything of significance for the understanding of the play, was not called for. The criticism on the play, while not extensive, is adequate, in view of the little value it has as drama. Our chief interest in the play must lie in its possible relationship to Calderón's *La vida es sueño*. It was Paz y Melia who first saw in one episode of the Rojas *comedia* a close parallel to the basic one of *La vida es sueño*. The episode in *El natural desdichado* is the one in which the drunken Mogrollo, the *gracioso* of the piece, at the command of the emperor Vespasian, is brought to the palace, is clothed in royal garb and upon recovering from his stupor is addressed by all around him as "emperor," after which he is given an intoxicant, carried out of the palace and restored to his original lowly condition, with the result that when he again awakens he believes that all that has happened has

been a dream. More recently, Professor Dale, believing that "Rojas glimpsed vaguely the whole idea involved in Calderón's *La vida es sueño*," has made the further suggestion of a parallel between the emperors Vitellius and Vespasian, who figure so prominently in Rojas's play, and the hero of Calderón's work: "Vitellius is Sigismundo before he has been purged of his baser nature; Vespasian is the purified Sigismundo" (*Hispanic Review*, II (1934), 322, 325). Dr. Crowell accepts these suggestions and concludes: "It would now seem reasonable to venture to suggest as a possible direct source for Calderón's *La vida es sueño* the version in our play, *El natural desdichado*" (page lviii).

Except for this possible connection with Calderón's masterpiece, however, the play has little to recommend it. The editor admits its weaknesses: its lack of unity of plot, its inconsistencies in the portrayal of the two main characters, its anachronisms. At the same time he agrees with Paz y Melia's praise of its handling of the language of the *rufianes*, of its burlesque and picaresque scenes and of its characterization of the *gracioso*, and he adds his own commendation of certain other features, as follows: "There is action aplenty, dramatic situation, clear, virile language free from the affectation and obscurities of the period just beginning, and a skillful and facile handling of many verse forms" (page lx). This latter praise needs some qualification. Whatever skill Rojas may have had in the handling of verse forms, his verse is too often marred by halting and inharmonious phrasing. Even in the mechanics of versification he found difficulty or was careless, as may be seen in lines 696, 1274, 1709, 1732-1733, and 1765, which must be read with forced, unconventional dieresis or synalepha, and in lines 2072, one syllable too long, and 2187, one syllable too short. As to Rojas's being a poet, we need only observe that he ended line 2529 as he did: "y nadie diga de aquesta agua, etcétera." In attempting to explain the shortcomings of his author as a dramatist, Dr. Crowell points to the condition of the Spanish theatre at the time *El natural desdichado* was composed. Lope de Vega, we are told, was the playwright of the day, "but it is the writers of a somewhat later period who became his followers and profited by imitating his style and technique; we can not, then, look upon Rojas, in his one known play, as an imitator of Lope, although the latter's plays were, of course, well known to him" (page lv). Again, some qualification is necessary. In certain respects Rojas does show the influence of Lope: in the appearance in the play of a *gracioso*, a figure only shortly before introduced into the theatre by Lope, and in the types and percentages of the verse forms, which correspond closely to Lope's practice at the time (ca. 1600). (Since the editor does not give the percentages of the meters used in the play, I include them here: 50% *redondilla*; 28.3% *quintilla*; 11% *romance*; 6.6% *octava*; 1.8% *endecasílabos asonantados monorrimos*—these might perhaps be considered as part of the *romance* passages, which would then total 12.8%; 1.3% *soneto*; .8% *estancia*.) To some extent, Rojas imitated Lope, but he lacked the lyric gift and craftsmanship.

A number of criticisms must be made of the transcription of the text of

El natural desdichado. Dr. Crowell is mistaken in stating (page 4, note 1) that the two *coplas* referred to in the stage direction at the beginning of the play "are merely suggested and do not appear in the manuscript." As may be seen in the facsimile of the first page of the autograph (facing page 4), the first eight lines of the play—two *redondillas*—are the two *coplas* alluded to in the stage direction. The editor further fails to understand that the words "fuego etta," which alone make up line 513, refer to the two-line refrain quoted twenty lines earlier, and by not repeating the refrain here his verse count for the play falls short by one line. Apparently "etta" was not recognized as the abbreviation of "etcétera," since here and again in line 2529 it was left unchanged, though the editor tells us (page liii) that he has invariably resolved the abbreviations occurring in the manuscript. It may further be pointed out, in connection with the versification, that in the tabulation of the metrical scheme (page lxx), the three separate passages of *endecasílabos asonantados monorrimos* (lines 491-494; 514-515; 569-572) are improperly designated as *versos sueltos*. The original spelling of the manuscript, except for abbreviations, has been retained, but the punctuation, accentuation and use of capitals have been modernized. The dieresis, instead of the accent mark, has been used over "y" standing for accented "i": *trayā* (= *traía*), etc. It should not have been used, however, in *fuÿ* (lines 978, 3202, 3204, 3226) or in *ay* (= *ahí*), in line 1247, where *ay* must be read as a monosyllable. On the other hand, the real dieresis is missing in *vüestra* (line 696), *ciüello* (line 1274) and *crüel* (line 3169); reference has already been made to Rojas's use of forced dieresis in the first two of these words.² The Notes contain interesting and helpful comments on various passages; we are shown, for example, how Rojas utilized certain material found in the contemporary Spanish translation of Suetonius's *Lives of the Caesars*. A few of the annotations are open to criticism. The note to line 856 confuses the *le* of this line with the *le* in line 24; in the latter, *le* stands for "him," not, as the note on page 5 implies, for "it" (*¡Todos así le decimos!* means *¡Todos así le llamamos!* i.e., *le llamamos rey*). The meaning of line 2544 seems to be rather "Before I ruin his features ('break his face')," in which case *le* must be dative and therefore different from the *le* in line 24 or that in line 856. The Notes are easily consulted, but no index has been provided.

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2. Several errata occur in the text: *principio* (l. 259), *ecogimos* (l. 410), *hambriente* (l. 626), *acción* (prose passage, p. 103, l. 6), *piense*, for *pienso* (l. 2256). Is not *perdone* (l. 721) a misprint for *perdona*, and *lo* (l. 1648) a misprint for *la*? Some accents are misplaced or missing: *aspíd* (l. 627), *querriá* (l. 1333), *arbol* (l. 1761), *palio* (stage direction following l. 2066), *varías* (l. 2459), *jurare*, for *juraré* (l. 2900). In l. 1462, *le* is not necessarily "a careless slip" (p. 69, n. 1), but is more likely the *le* for *les* common in classical and colloquial usage. If *exjimirme* (l. 2906) really occurs in the manuscript, it should have been annotated. There is faulty punctuation in ll. 364 (delete 1), 813 (read *¿cómo . . . ?*), 1530 (supply comma after *casa*), 2267 (replace comma by period), 2325 (delete comma) and 3470 (read . . . *homicida, es cierto*).

A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. Part IV: The Period of Racine, 1673-1700. By HENRY CARRINGTON LANCASTER. 2 volumes. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1940. Volume I, pp. 482. Volume II, pp. 483-984.

Le magnifique édifice commencé par M. Lancaster il y a une quinzaine d'années au profit et à la gloire du théâtre français au XVII^e siècle touche à son achèvement: encore un neuvième volume de conclusions générales et d'*index* variés, et cette entreprise capitale aura reçu son harmonieux couronnement—le faite réservé à l'œuvre de ceux-là seuls qui font preuve d'énergie créatrice en même temps que de patient labeur et de curiosité attentive.

"La Période racinienne, 1673-1700": entendons par là, non point une omniprésence du poète d'*Andromaque*, mais, fort légitimement, les conséquences de divers faits qui l'auront servi: la suprématie du public policé—parterre ou "gens de goût"—au lieu des doctes ou des incultes; séparation des genres, favorable au maintien d'un "style"; admission généralisée du "jour dramatique," c'est-à-dire de la *crise* préférée à la *destinée* par la plupart des auteurs; en 1680, monopole de fait qui "spécialise" la troupe de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne dans la tragédie; enfin, l'amour sous ses diverses formes comme ingrédient nécessaire d'une pièce de théâtre. Une sorte de cristallisation des possibilités scéniques (et non une façon de décret providentiel, proclamé par les Nisard et les Merlet) a conduit à un maximum de netteté les multiples et complexes efforts qui marquaient le début du siècle, ce "théâtre shakespearien sans Shakespeare" que désormais le public moyen oublie et réprouve. Rien de significatif comme de relire, après le patient exposé de M. Lancaster, les pages ingénieuses où Lytton Strachey, dans ses *Landmarks of French Literature*, évoquait la multiplicité shakespearienne, chère aux Anglo-Saxons, pour lui opposer son antipode racinien—et pour déclarer ce dernier triomphant, en fait, sur la majorité des théâtres, sous des formes inférieures, au détriment de la complexité et du mélange complet des genres.

La documentation de M. Lancaster est d'autant plus méritoire qu'elle avait à se poursuivre, d'un continent à l'autre, dans des circonstances qui n'étaient pas toujours à l'avantage de ces pacifiques activités. A mon tour, j'observerai que, si mes propres souvenirs des Archives Nationales sont exacts, les dossiers de la Maison du Roi, dans cet opulent dépôt souvent négligé des historiens littéraires, ajouteraient des précisions aux *Registres* de la Comédie-Française et à d'autres inédits documentaires: les hôtes privilégiés des théâtres officiels y sont représentés par des listes correctement mises à jour, et les dépenses enregistrées par de vigilants commis ne manquent pas d'y figurer pour des "divertissements" que les grands argentiers du royaume ne surveillaient pas moins que les somptuosités de Marly ou de Versailles. Ces détails financiers et leurs rigueurs, si différentes du *bien-aller* des romans comiques d'antan, sont assurément des à-côtés, et nullement, comme le prétendent certains théoriciens de l'offre et la demande en matière d'Art, l'essentiel d'une inspiration singu-

lièrement féconde, continue et suivie. M. Lancaster aurait à juste titre donné à ces deux volumes "raciniens" une épigraphe reproduisant la charmante boutade du poète lui-même: "La Poésie attire les poètes; les poètes attirent les comédiennes, et les comédiennes attirent le public . . ."

Pour M. Lancaster, ces détails positifs, si importants, de la représentation devant la Cour, ou les Grands, ou le parterre debout, ou même, hélas! devant les privilégiés qui se glissent à l'arrière de la scène, ne sont cependant que peu de chose auprès des pièces elles-mêmes. Même de second ou de troisième ordre, les pièces examinées sont, en note, l'objet d'une analyse précise¹ que double dans le texte le commentaire relatif à la discussion des caractères, à la distribution des rôles, au rappel éventuel de la biographie de l'auteur, à la mention des critiques favorables ou hostiles. Et quand on aura signalé que l'historien littéraire traite avec tout le tact voulu les délicates questions de dépendance attestées par analogies et emprunts,² on aura, je pense, rendu pleine justice à l'élaboration sagace et à l'utile mise en œuvre d'une riche et sûre documentation—sorte de jardin à la française tracé dans la luxuriance de centaines de pièces de théâtre, avec des citations qui font honneur, par leur choix comme par leur correction typographique, à l'auteur et à ses imprimeurs.³

Cette densité même, l'étroite connexion qui se présente ici entre des œuvres similaires bien faites pour se commander en effet, se maintenir en état de mutuelle dépendance, ne marquent-elles point les mérites mêmes et les limites de cette dramaturgie luxuriante que M. Lancaster tenait à nous présenter sans déchet? On sent, chez ces auteurs, chez leurs interprètes et dans une partie du public, une émulation, un "coude-à-coude" dont nous est offert un compte rigoureux grâce à la méthode de l'auteur. En dehors de quelques aventuriers que leur destin plus que leur désir promène loin des sentiers battus, le vent du large, qui avait gonflé les voiles des contemporains de la Fronde et dont la centralisation administrative avait d'abord capté quelques frissons

1. *L'Isle d'Alcine* de Regnard, publiée en 1867, est réduite (p. 732) à la portion plus que congrue; à ce propos, les notes transcrites par M. P. Chaponnière dans la *RLC*, II, 282, auraient marqué avantageusement la façon dont la comédie italienne travaillait. Les pièces de "satire politique" de la page 937 doivent toutes être assignées à la propagande anti-française dont le mystérieux Pierre Marteau gère la principale officine.

2. Quelques réserves pour "l'amour du grec," p. 75, et le "roman par la queue," p. 473.

3. Page 289, il faut probablement éblouissent la vue, sans m'; p. 388-389, note 6. *Chefs-d'œuvre*; p. 749, je ne sais ni par où, ni par quoi; et p. 760, restituer à la n. 12, *Mais avant qu'il se lève*. Un excès de scrupule, p. 612, fait ajouter un e élidé à *encor*; les indispensables contractions de la p. 680 (*P'eusses-tu cru*) sont esquivées; si la rime *âne-femme* de la p. 434 est exacte, elle peut appeler un commentaire. Ce sont là vétilles à côté de la plus enviable correction matérielle. "Belgique" semble anachronique pour l'exil des Deshoulières, p. 186; d'autre part la discussion des pp. 140-141 parle de la *Princesse de Clèves* comme traitant un sujet "moderne," alors que la Cour des Valois était bien du passé, et que de clairvoyants lecteurs signalaient le caractère de *romance* d'une œuvre que seuls de modernes points de vue ont plutôt "dénaturée."

vagabonds, cesse évidemment de souffler. Un homme aussi informé que l'abbé François Bertaut aura pu discuter en décembre 1659 avec Calderon lui-même, sans manifester de curiosité pour une théorie parfaitement consciente d'"irrégularité" dramatique. Saint-Evremond reste attaché aux formules cornéliennes sans que l'émancipe en rien d'essentiel l'exotisme britannique. Il y a, de plus en plus, des Pyrénées et une Manche pour isoler un ensemble, copieux à souhait et fait pour satisfaire son public, mais qui souffrira, le moment venu, de sa perfection même. Et comme M. Lancaster est fort justement disposé à ne pas s'exagérer, comme tels théologiens de nos lettres, la part du Jansénisme chez Racine poète, ni la marque cartésienne—découverte indiscrètement (page 102), comme il insiste peut-être à l'excès (page 126)—sur une sorte de placide indifférence aux idées, l'hellénisme même du poète d'*Iphigénie* semble presque faire rentrer dans le rang l'auteur qui domine cette époque et qui récréait, en somme, un style en pratiquant l'*ἱμερος* des Grecs, que satisfait seule et apaise une forme harmonieuse.⁴

Quel rang? Celui d'un maître assurément, mais d'un maître parmi ses analogues, sinon ses égaux, non d'un génie parmi des talents. On pourra "cabaler" contre Racine, prétendre l'égaliser ou le distancer—et l'on relirait volontiers, à l'appui de ce brouillement des valeurs, la lettre en vers où Baron offre à la duchesse du Maine les *Œuvres* de Corneille et de Molière:

*Racine marchait à leur suite,
J'en suis l'oculaire témoin,
Et malgré son rare mérite,
Il ne les suivait que de loin . . .*

C'est que, de plus en plus, dans une sorte de circuit fermé, de domaine plus qu'à demi clos, les semblables s'attirent. Un public façonné par des modèles proclamés s'intéresserait difficilement à des originalités marquées;⁵ les variations deviennent quasi impossibles, comme dans une serre abritée contre toutes possibilités de fécondation imprévue. Théophile, Corneille et Racine comptent surtout pour le jeune Pradon—qu'il faut remercier M. Lancaster de traiter avec mansuétude—lequel ne manquait pas de rappeler à d'aigres aînés qu'eux

4. Signaler p. 12 que Racine se met au net, non seulement avec Aristote qu'il discute, visiblement pour extraire l'esprit et non la lettre de la *Poétique* (*Grands Ecrivains*, tome VI), mais avec D'Aubignac et la *Pratique du théâtre* (*ibid.*, VI). D'autre part il possède Heinsius, qui aurait dès lors quelque droit à figurer dans l'*Index* de ces deux tomes.

5. Cf. Charles Perrault dédiant à Bossuet son *Saint Paulin*, en septembre 1685: "... le peuple à qui l'on veut plaire . . . les dames qui, par elles-mêmes et par le grand nombre de ceux qui les suivent, font l'affluence dans le théâtre, ne peuvent souffrir des héros s'ils ne ressemblent à leurs amants, etc." Dans le même temps, Bayle observe que l'opéra est "la maladie à la mode," et la comédie "un repas donné au peuple": des laïques tiennent ainsi le langage normal des moralistes religieux. Pour une certaine diversité dans les goûts malgré tout, cf. les délicieux *Trois Spectacles* (*Théâtre Français*, XII) de D'Aigueberre, où, après un *Prologue*, une tragédie en un acte, une comédie et une "pastorale héroïque" se font suite. Mais c'est qu'on est à la campagne . . . Cet échantillonnage, assurément postérieur à l'époque envisagée, me semble recevable pour des survivances et des dosages intéressants.

aussi dépendaient de prédécesseurs, qui s'appelaient Mairêt, Tristan et Rotrou. Mme Deshoulières s'appuiera sur ce Racine qu'elle raillait trois ans plus tôt. De Visé s'inspire de Scudéry et de La Tuillerie, etc., etc.

La comédie seule se permet, semble-t-il, des incursions plus aventureuses dans un monde plus actuel—mais c'est parce que, Molière n'ayant pu tout prévoir, des "caractères" omis par son pénétrant coup d'œil ou suscités par des conditions nouvelles, moins essentiels peut-être, quoique aussi aptes à divertir les spectateurs, apparaissent sur des tréteaux comiques. La guerre de 1672 à 1678, le relâchement des mœurs de la dernière décade (dont se plaint comme de juste l'Eglise bien avant ces temps, et probablement fort justement de tous temps, cf. Bossuet à Rancé, 1682), l'importance de la "question d'argent," les problèmes de la fiscalité créent de cocasses anomalies, souvent traitées "à la manière de . . ."

Et puis c'est tout. Du moins est-ce là ce que dévoile un attentif dépouillement. Où se cache donc "la littérature expression de la société"—formule contre laquelle a trop souvent guerroyé l'auteur du présent compte-rendu pour qu'il puisse être accusé d'exagérer l'importance du contre-coup ressenti par les lettres quand se modifient les rapports sociaux, ce qui est bien le cas dans les dernières décades du XVII^e siècle? La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes, la Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes, la grande misère de 1694, la consolidation d'une monarchie moins "divine" en Angleterre, les fréquentes ambassades exotiques à Versailles, les interprétations de la Comète de 1680 et l'indéniable vague de crédulité attestée aussi bien par l'affaire des poisons que par la *baguette divinatoire*—tout cela, cause et symptôme tout ensemble, pourrait fournir matière à des remarques dépassant l'emploi éventuel qui en est fait par des auteurs comiques, l'allusion secrète glissée par des auteurs tragiques, ou le choix indirect d'un sujet plus ou moins analogue. Et c'est là que l'espèce de monde à part du Théâtre, encore davantage ramené à lui-même par son historien, fait l'effet, plus que de raison sans doute, d'un microcosme égoïste et délicieux où pénétreraient tout juste quelques abbés galants, des chevaliers d'industrie plus ou moins avérés, d'inquiétants marchands d'orviétan, quelques militaires sympathiques ou douteux—et aussi Marie Stuart, le comte d'Essex et Anne de Bretagne. Cependant la ville négociente de Lyon prend une importance que sa rivale parisienne lui contestait aux heures brillantes du règne et qui préparera la voie aux drames bourgeois. Les voyageurs Tavernier et Bernier n'ont pas le seul avantage de rimer (page 493) et leur Orient révèle de nouveaux prestiges à la Marco Polo, même avant l'éblouissement des *Mille et une nuits*, et fort au-delà des parasols de la page 496. La "philosophie nouvelle," enfin, fait bruires à fond ses fuseaux, et sa diffusion déconcerte les anciennes croyances et précipite sans doute vers la magie des esprits bien ébranlés. Et il n'est pas jusqu'à la Germanie des Arminius qui ne signifie un triomphe moins décisif de Rome.

Il eût été intéressant de souligner, sans exagérer le trait, des renouvelle-

ments de pensée qui, mieux que des épisodes de mœurs, affectaient quoi qu'ils en eussent les fournisseurs des théâtres et tels de leurs critiques: sans doute se fût éclairé du même coup le fait que les Italiens, "singes en tout" sauf en verve et en *lazzi*, étaient entre 1688, où sont interdits "les mots à double entendre qui sont trop libres" et 1697, où Louis XIV fait fermer leur scène, les témoins les plus véridiques du changement—et, comme jadis pour Molière, les inspireurs de Dancourt, de Regnard et de Lesage.

"Molière, dira Ponsard, n'a laissé sa succession à personne, sauf un legs à Lesage"; Racine, rappelle M. Lancaster, page 191, a été accusé d'avoir "tué la tragédie française"; mais notre historien ajoute que Dante n'a pas détruit la poésie italienne, ni Goethe les lettres allemandes. Il est donc entendu que de telles propositions, dans leur forme péremptoire d'axiomes, ne sont guère recevables. Elles ne laissent pas de justifier, même contre la boutade de M. Jules Romains citée en tête de ces beaux volumes, la simplification trop facile de la légende contre l'histoire, réduisant à quelques noms un pullulement autrement significatif, et laissant à l'érudition le soin de rétablir une multiplicité que la mémoire négligente des générations suivantes réduirait aisément à quelques grands noms représentatifs. Heureuses les époques, heureuses les variétés de littérature qui bénéficient, comme dans le cas présent, d'une vérification à la fois dévotieuse et attentive!

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Revivals and Importations of French Comedies in England, 1749-1800. By WILLARD AUSTIN KINNE. New York, Columbia University Press, 1939. Pp. xv+310.

The second half of the eighteenth century may scarcely be considered a brilliant or significant period in dramatic history, either in France or in England. It was, however, a period of great dramatic activity, and any investigation of the interchange of plots and themes in the comedy of the two countries is worthy of notice. Such a task is truly a labor of Sisyphus because of several difficulties inherent in the subject—the reticence or obtuseness of English dramatists about acknowledging indebtedness, the practice of combining plots from a number of different sources, and the possibility that any given adaptation may turn out to be several removes from its original French source; all of these make the job of the literary detective very nearly endless. Dr. Kinne has wisely limited himself to a consideration only "of those acted comedies or comic entertainments which were either avowedly drawn from France or were ascribed to a French source by eighteenth-century reviewers" (page ix). Thus he has made no pretence of tracking down every single unacknowledged borrowing. Even so, Dr. Kinne has estimated that one-fourth of the plays presented in England from 1749 to 1800, including

revivals and new offerings, were indebted in some way to the work of French dramatists (page 246).

Among the interesting results of the present investigation is the persistence throughout the entire period of the influence of Molière, though it becomes worn rather thin by the end of the century. Regnard, Dancourt, and Marivaux likewise kept their place on the English stage. Among the new French dramatists represented in adaptations and borrowings were Destouches, Saint-Foix, Sedaine, Favart, Diderot, and Beaumarchais, attesting to the popularity in England both of the sentimental *drame* and of the new musical comedy. In all, 175 new plays (102 of them acted) are considered at some length by Dr. Kinne, along with a vast number of revivals, many of them of Restoration plays. Few first-rate dramatists appear among the English adapters, but there were many shrewd purveyors of dramatic fare, including Bickerstaffe, Dibdin, the Colmans *père et fils*, Burgoyne, Holcroft, and Mrs. Inchbald. It is nevertheless difficult to escape the conclusion that the English plays were mainly third-rate adaptations of second-rate originals.

The author deserves commendation for painstaking research with considerable reading in contemporary magazines (less in newspapers) and detailed comparison of texts. The result is a liberally annotated study with abundance of factual material. One or two statements, perhaps, need qualification. Fielding's *Intriguing Chambermaid* is referred to at some length (pages 37-39) without being identified as a ballad opera. Dr. Kinne's description of *Richard Cœur de Lion* (1784) as "introducing history to comic opera" (page 193) is at least misleading in view of a number of earlier English musical pieces dealing with historical personages. The author's occasional characterization of the English borrowings as "thefts" and "pilferings" is not always strictly accurate in its application to an age when borrowing from earlier dramatists was a common and long-established practice. It is not in such minor details, however, but rather in organization and treatment that Dr. Kinne's book needs to be most seriously criticized. The division of the chapters decade by decade into "revivals" and "new plays" is not only mechanical but confusing chronologically, as we are continually being whisked back to the Restoration and the early eighteenth century. The revivals might better have been relegated to the appendix or to a final chapter. Despite a brief Introduction and Conclusion, the plethora of detail and Dr. Kinne's singularly unemphatic style tend to obscure the relevance or significance of his material. Nowhere does he sufficiently evaluate the character or worth of French influence, or give more than a casual discussion of the methods of adaptation. Numerous hints and suggestions appear throughout, but the book as a whole lacks direction, a weakness which is emphasized by a pedestrian and mechanical literary style. Since the writer of a scholarly book is necessarily responsible for structural form, it may not be amiss to point out also a few errors or lacunae in the editing: Chapter VI is not divided according to the usual plan, the appendix on page 250 lacks an explanatory heading, and—

most serious of all in a book designed largely for reference—the index fails to include the titles of the plays. It is regrettable that such deficiencies as have been mentioned should invalidate what is fundamentally a thorough and conscientious piece of literary research.

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Quatre Etudes. Par PAUL HAZARD, de l'Académie française. New York, Oxford University Press, 1940. Pp. x+154.

This is a most timely publication. Professor Paul Hazard has recently received the highest honor that his country can bestow on a man of letters: the French Academy elected him to membership, as it had Joseph Bédier, because it recognized in him not merely all the qualities of an eminent literary historian, but also the virtues of a lucid master of criticism, the gifts of a born stylist, and the uncommon ability to discuss the most abstruse subjects *en honnête homme* and to comment upon the masterpieces of past centuries with respect, tact and grace.

His election to the time-honored body of Immortals, only a few months before Paris underwent the direst ordeal in its history, came as a symbol of the spirit of his country. The votes of the French Academy crowned and consecrated thirty years successfully spent by Professor Hazard in bringing about sympathetic understanding and intellectual cooperation among the scholars of two continents and of many countries. Comparative literature—not altogether a new science, but renovated in its spirit and its method—seemed to have found its acknowledged masters in France in the present century of strife and discord. An indefatigable scholarship, a curiosity always on the alert, a rigorous method, a philosophical and comprehensive outlook: such are the main qualities required of adepts of that young and ambitious discipline. To these and other gifts, Professor Hazard has added something even rarer: a discreet, lovable and deep personal charm. "Peu d'hommes ont cette grâce divine du cosmopolitisme," Baudelaire wrote in 1855 in that masterpiece of French criticism, *Curiosités esthétiques*. In Professor Hazard, scholars and students throughout Europe and the two Americas salute that gift of efficacious grace. They quote him in bibliographies, they discuss his views with respect; and they always pronounce his name with that joyful flash in the eye which denotes gratitude and affection.

The present volume is a worthy monument to one of Professor Hazard's visits to American universities. In 1931 Bryn Mawr College invited him to lecture on the Mary Flexner foundation. He combined in those lectures, as the present volume testifies, both the elusive lightness of touch and the sprightly subtlety which a feminine audience deserves and can best appreciate, and the solidity and high seriousness worthy of one of the best American institutions of learning.

The four lectures which make up this book—the second volume by Professor Hazard to be published in French in this country—cannot easily be analyzed or discussed. In their manner, in the vividness of the literary evocations called up by an erudite and artistic pen, in the unassuming attitude of a scholar who refrains from teaching or proving, and discovers anew with his readers the freshness of literary masterpieces, lies the greatest virtue of these essays. The pleasure of the reader will, however, be a lasting one. Many a passage in the book will awaken new meditations, or will open new vistas and even throw light on some of our present harassing problems.

Three of the essays deal with romantic and unromantic poetry. Baudelaire called Voltaire "l'antipoète," and yet, even in the century of Voltaire which misunderstood and banished poetry, poetry refused to die (*Sur un cycle poétique*). With Romanticism, it revived (*Romantiques*). Modern criticism, reappraising the French Romantics with the experience of a hundred years and with the comparison of other European literatures, is tempted to be severe to Lamartine, Musset and Hugo. True, the German Romantics were more irrational, more obscure, more dreamy, the English more passionate, more intense and, on the whole, nearer to perfection. We forget, however, that if Romanticism in France was a slower and more timid growth than in Germany or in England, it struck perhaps deeper roots. Only in the fifth and sixth decades of the nineteenth century (with "La Maison du berger," "La Vigne et la maison," *Les Contemplations* and *Les Fleurs du mal*) did French Romanticism come to its own. Even then, it was less monotonously dreamlike than Novalis or Jean-Paul Richter, less visionary and aerial than "Christabel," "Endymion" or "Epipsychidion"; but it succeeded in "loading every rift with ore," as Keats himself had advised Shelley to do. It deserted cloud-capped towers to tread upon substantial earth; it mastered concrete reality; it rivalled prose; it turned mud into gold and evil into fragrant flowers through its obstinate alchemy.

The essay entitled *Solitude de Baudelaire* touches upon some of the heart-rending dilemmas of our day. Can the poet ignore the broad human issues for which his contemporaries are struggling and dying? Should he not allow his heart to throb with those of his countrymen and his pen to voice their anxieties and their hopes? Baudelaire refused to be concerned with the social and political problems of his age; he refused to propose to the enthusiastic old ladies of his times an "uplifting" view of life. Tennyson, Robert and Elizabeth Browning were then enjoying a sedative mid-Victorian happiness.¹ Baudelaire spurned that depressing optimism. "La littérature doit passer avant tout, avant mon estomac, avant mon plaisir, avant ma mère," he tragically proclaimed, three years before his death and while tortured by debts and misery, to the middle class *notaire* to whom he periodically had

1. "Man does not aspire to happiness, only the Englishman does that," as Nietzsche puts it at the beginning of his *Twilight of the Idols*.

to apply for money. He sacrificed his chances for happiness and his life to poetry; but his poetry has remained alive while posterity, that insatiable Moloch, turned its wrath on poets who had lived happily and sung placidly. Baudelaire never wrote about the politics, the revolutions or the wars of his age; but he expressed his age and his country better than any other artist in Europe.

In the final essay, *L'Homme de sentiment* (which the *Romanic Review* first published in 1937), Professor Hazard has condensed some of the historical and psychological discoveries which he made while studying the most perilous "crisis of conscience" which Europe had known before our own days. Those pages will doubtless appear in their proper light in the future volumes of the new academician, which many readers await impatiently as the broadest and most enlightening synthesis of the eighteenth century yet attempted. Such apparent ease and discreet simplicity, so much literary talent and *savoir-faire*, and yet a never-failing effort to re-examine every piece of evidence and to scan all the texts patiently: those qualities are seldom found together in a scholar of Professor Hazard's eminence. Two valuable lessons have been taught by him in Europe and America: that clarity, good taste and modest wisdom can be preserved even in the discussion of ideas and philosophical problems; that literary history, dealing with works which had, and still have, in them life and beauty, loses nothing if it translates its results into writings instinct with life and clad with beauty.

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Sainte-Beuve, Studio su Virgilio. Traduzione e saggio introduttivo sul Sainte-Beuve. Di TOMMASO FIORE. Bari, Laterza, 1939. Pp. cxi+256.

There are twenty or thirty volumes of Sainte-Beuve more important by any reckoning than his *Etude sur Virgile*. At the critic's centennial in 1904 Gaston Boissier, his successor in the chair of Latin Poetry at the Collège de France, faced the problem of discussing the book, and solved it by talking urbanely of something else; Boissier engaged in speculation as to what Sainte-Beuve's course at the Collège de France might have been had not politics and intrigue abruptly terminated it, and he commented agreeably on the development of classical scholarship in France.¹ The truth is the book is pleasant and not much more—by the standard Sainte-Beuve himself set with his major achievements.

Why then a translation into Italian for a Biblioteca di Cultura Moderna which in its three hundred and fifty volumes offers nothing else of the famous man? One looks for the answer in the Introduction, to find only brief, perfunctory and not too favorable comment on the *Virgile* plus extensive treatment of numerous alleged weaknesses of other works by its author. The total

1. *Le Livre d'Or de Sainte-Beuve*. Paris, Fontemoing, 1904, pp. 1-11.

effect is bewildering. Why bother to translate a minor treatise of so inferior a person? One might be inclined to give this new item bibliographical recognition, and pass on.

But Tommaso Fiore discusses Sainte-Beuve, vigorously, from a quite professedly un-French viewpoint, and such appraisals always have at least documentary importance. He is eager to get at the essential quality of the French mind, which for him as for De Sanctis resides in its "intellettualismo afilosofico" (page lxxvii). In general he shows familiarity with Sainte-Beuve and with writings about him, especially those against him such as the abusive work of Michiels,² the unsavory confidences of Pons,³ and the at least semi-hostile studies of the *bien-pensant* Victor Giraud (who insists so often that Sainte-Beuve is a "nature seconde" and whom one might in turn label, it has been said, a "nature première"). So that we have the usual *clichés*, sometimes partly valid sometimes not: Sainte-Beuve was not stable, not virile, not moral, not a gentleman, not kind (if the "graffiare" is only another way of representing the customary "méchant," Fiore's verb is somehow more effectively unpleasant). But the newer and vehemently Italian objections to the "incoreggiabile francese" (page xxxii) are really interesting and not to be vehemently set aside.

What Sainte-Beuve conspicuously lacks then is passion. He is a born *writer* ("nato scrittore," page xxxiii)—and this is no compliment. Here would be support for a remark made from inside France, by Giraudoux, that as soon as a Frenchman takes a pen in hand he becomes, even in spite of himself, a "lettré."⁴ French literature, for Giraudoux, has become a liturgy; what the greatest writers have offered is not so much "expression" as "considération": Hugo *looks at* the damned, Chateaubriand *contemplates* misfortune, Corneille *composes* stanzas about old-age. The pen works, not the pharynx, in this "concours d'éloquence" (Fiore would clearly be on the pharyngeal side). Here is something close indeed to the Sainte-Beuve who says: "J'écoute et je ne suis pas ému," but the complication at this point for Giraudoux, and for Fiore on the subject of Sainte-Beuve's being too literary, resides in the fact that the great critic at the moment of saying this is protesting against *l'éloquence*. The issue raised by Fiore is of primary importance but his treatment of it is too summary. All this is related naturally to the large question

2. This is Alfred Michiels, whom Fiore refers to as Michiel. The ferocity of Michiels is best represented in his pamphlet against Sainte-Beuve, *Les Nouvelles Fourberies de Scapin*, Paris, Moreau, 1847, with which the Italian writer is perhaps not acquainted. Fiore would also find an interesting revelation of Sainte-Beuve's capacity for tolerance in a letter written by the critic to Michiels presumably in 1840 (*Correspondance générale*, III, 216-217; cf. *London Times Literary Supplement*, Dec. 3, 1938, p. 217).

3. Cf. Pons, *Sainte-Beuve et ses inconnues*, Paris, Ollendorf, 1870. The reliability of this book may be gaged by the fact that its alleged "Préface de Sainte-Beuve" is merely a series of quotations from the Lundiste about his critical methods.

4. Cf. Jean Giraudoux, "Charles-Louis Philippe," *Nouvelle Revue Française*, XLIX (1937), 538-539.

of perspective, objectivity, the historical approach, in criticism. Fiore quotes with approval Flaubert's strictures on the historical attitude, Fiore approves naturally of Croce and of "libertà creatrice," and thinks that Sainte-Beuve does not get sufficiently above rules and circumstances and into the serene realm of the extra-temporal. I think he is exceedingly vulnerable here, and I think he could be proved to be wrong by the evidence of the very Sainte-Beuve essays he quotes and by the evidence of the very *Etude sur Virgile* he translates. There is also a significant passage, almost a declaration of faith, in the final volume of the *Port-Royal*, of which Fiore cites an important part (pages lix-lx) but from which he omits the most telling paragraph, where there is indubitably a dedication to the "serene regioni dell'eternitè." "

The essential defects of Sainte-Beuve as seen by Fiore are called essentially French. I suspect that enough Frenchmen are aware of the defects (whether or not in relation to Sainte-Beuve) to make the generalization slightly paradoxical. In any case the candidly nationalistic bias of Fiore is a phenomenon in itself, for any one scrutinizing *la Cultura Moderna*, and the talent the author possesses for disagreement occasionally makes him stimulating in the manner of Brunetière.

A good deal of the comment of other Italians on Sainte-Beuve has been friendly and favorable and very recently Carlo Bo in his voluminous study, *Delle immagini giovanili di Sainte-Beuve*,⁵ has been positively lyric. As such Bo seems to have been particularly displeasing to Fiore, who expresses himself as follows (page xxxv, note 1):

Non so se la pretesa sia eccessiva, si vorrebbe che l'autore di questo libro non odiasse come sua nemica mortale la chiarezza, specie dopo una lettura di Sainte-Beuve [for the moment Fiore is almost guilty of liking French clarity]. . . . È questa, per chi non lo sapesse, la critica nuovissima, d'imitazione francese naturalmente, in ritardo però di parecchi anni, la critica ermetica.

No one will fear, for Tommaso Fiore, the doom of Laodicea.

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Images et Romans: Parenté des estampes et du roman réaliste de 1815 à 1865. Par M. MESPOULET. Paris, Société d'Édition "Les Belles-Lettres," 1939. Pp. 139, 47 ill.

According to a French scholar, Balzac could not have written all his stories from first-hand experience; they are too rich in details, in human types and landscapes. What then was the source of so many of the characters and situations of his *Comédie humaine*? The lithographs and wood-cuts of the time, says Mlle Mespoulet. "Le milieu où l'œuvre de Balzac prit racine [fut] . . . bien l'estampe française du XIX^e siècle, fille de la gravure du XVIII^e." Balzac loved the cheap pictures which France produced by the thousands, and which

5. Firenze, Parenti, 1938 (513 pp.).

presented so vividly the landscape, the manners and the psychology of the people. He knew in person the leading lithographers and illustrators; and the very titles of his books, the various *Scènes de la Vie . . .*, betray his indebtedness to imagery: they recall the earlier lithographed and engraved *Scènes* issued in the eighteen twenties and thirties. In locating the novels in various provinces, in presenting provincial life as a unity embracing the environment and local traditions, Balzac is inspired, she thinks, by the *Voyages pittoresques*, the gigantic undertaking of Taylor and Nodier in twenty-four illustrated folio volumes, which made France conscious of the flavor of her regions and her old monuments. The whole literature of regionalism is profoundly obligated to such images.

Balzac was not the only writer formed by these prints. The whole movement of realism was fructified by them. Devoted to the everyday world and landscape, the writers responded warmly to another art which had preceded them in the same path. The public of the prints promoted a hearty realism, humor, variety and sense of actuality. The taste for prints springs from the new conditions of bourgeois society and anticipates the journals and photography. Mlle Mespoulet's little book abounds in detailed observations of the links between literature and the print and in sharp, precise characterizations of the related qualities of both. She discusses in turn the rise of lithography, caricature, satirical prints, landscape-views, the effects of social changes on the themes of the prints, and finally the legends on the prints as a kind of popular literature. Her work is extraordinarily rich in suggestions—almost too compact perhaps for a theme with so many interesting facets.

Several questions occur to me in reading this excellent book: is the realistic attitude of the writers of the thirties and forties due to the influence of prints which anticipated their realism, or does the literary realism merely respond sympathetically to similar attitudes in other arts? Is there any difference in kind between literary and pictorial realism? Is the style of the prints peculiar to this art or dependent in turn on the easel painting of the period? To what extent do the prints anticipate the style of later easel painting?

The author does not seem to me to give enough importance to the texts which are illustrated by the wood-cuts and lithographs, especially the works of a Monnier who is both writer and artist, and the various *Physiologies*, which are due to the collaboration of print-makers and novelists, including Balzac, and which therefore constitute the testing-ground of her view of the role of the print in conditioning the realistic tendencies of later literature. Mlle Mespoulet gives the impression that the realist movement of the eighteen fifties was nothing new literarily, that it was simply a rewarming of the realism of the forties. This seems to me doubtful; between Balzac and the De Goncourts there is already a deep gulf in attitude and method and conception of style, just as there is between Courbet and the Impressionists or even between Daumier and Courbet.

In describing the effects of the bourgeois régime of Louis-Philippe on the artists, she groups the suicide of Baron Gros, Grandville's madness and the death of Gavarni in solitude, together with atheism and materialism, as evidences of the social *misère* towards the end of the rule of Louis-Philippe. But it should be said that Gros drowned himself in 1835 at the age of sixty-four, presumably because of his feeling of failure and the conflict between his classicistic loyalties and the new romantic art which he had helped to form; Grandville was an unstable personality; Gavarni died in 1866; and materialism in the forties was an insurgent, often optimistic, and humanitarian doctrine. On the whole, Mlle Mespoulet is much clearer and sharper in describing the hideousness caricatured in the art of this time than in describing the standpoint of the caricaturist himself. Similarly, in dealing with the romantic taste for the provinces and the mediaeval monuments, she does not distinguish sufficiently between the conservative quality of this taste in the Restoration and the more radical sentiment for the people in the eighteen thirties and forties.

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Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), sa vie et son œuvre. Par YVONNE MARTINET.

Gap (Hautes-Alpes), Imprimerie Louis-Jean, 1940. Pp. 834.

Numa Roumestan par Alphonse Daudet: La Pièce et le roman. Par YVONNE MARTINET. Gap (Hautes-Alpes), Imprimerie Louis-Jean, 1940. Pp. 134.

Ever since Alphonse Daudet's death, we have been looking for a complete biography of the author of *Le Petit Chose*. It is indeed surprising that Daudet, whose works sold better than any other French author's for a decade beginning in 1874, and whose personal career was so well known during his lifetime, should have waited more than forty years for a full-length biography. True, several partial biographies, such as Ernest Daudet's *Mon Frère et moi*, Gerstmann's work in Germany and Sherard's in England, together with Daudet's autobiographical volumes, *Trente Ans de Paris* and *Souvenirs d'un homme de lettres*, spread his fame throughout Europe. But all these studies were written during Daudet's lifetime, and though filled with intimate details and anecdotes, were necessarily incomplete. Even Léon Daudet's psychological study of his father a few months after his death made no critical contribution.

Thereafter Daudet scholarship centered on particular phases of his life and works, until the publication in this, his centennial year, of the biographical volume by Mlle Martinet. Her thesis, presented at Montpellier, through bulk alone suggests a monumental work. A native herself of the *Midi*, she has made frequent pilgrimages to those localities in which Daudet lived, and has

accumulated biographical data from librarians and archivists of Nîmes, Lyons, and Alès. With evident pleasure she visited the room where her author was born and the farmhouse where he was nursed. She has read with care the *édition ne varietur* of 1930 and has studied much of the extensive critical material which has grown up about Daudet. In her research she has assembled a vast amount of evidence, so that within the covers of this one book can be found the largest collection of facts concerning Daudet that we possess today. The sixty-two chapters form concise divisions of his life and works, and in lieu of an index the table of contents serves adequately enough for reference.

Despite the size of the volume and the author's enthusiasm, many flaws are easily discerned. A close perusal of her book reveals that Mlle Martinet has read only Daudet's works and studies on Daudet. There is inadequate verification from other sources, with the result that the author has often accepted uncritically Daudet's own remarks about himself and his friends, when in reality, as those who know Daudet the *méridional* realize, even his autobiographical books are sprinkled with many of those *galéjades* he popularized in *Tartarin de Tarascon*. Hence in a study of Daudet, every statement made by him must be used with great discretion in reconstructing the facts of his life.

If Mlle Martinet's work shows much reading and research, her method, on the contrary, is far from satisfactory. She does not hesitate to give quotations of from five to six pages in length; in fact, conservatively speaking, more than one third of her book is direct quotation, much of it irrelevant. A still more serious charge is her habit of copying, textually, critical material from other critics without giving due credit. To cite only one instance: in telling the facts concerning *Tartarin de Tarascon* she has interspersed as much as five pages, paragraph by paragraph and word for word and without so much as a quotation mark, from Dégoumois' thesis, *L'Algérie d'A. Daudet*.

As a result the book is in considerable part a compilation of profuse notes, taken from many critics, not sufficiently well arranged in chronological order under chapter headings. Only on page 731, in that part of the book entitled "Œuvres de la maturité" where Daudet is at the end of his career, does the reader learn that the young Daudet served as Parisian reporter in 1859 for a Brussels' review, *L'Universel*. At the beginning of the chapter on *Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné* we read four pages of quotation concerning Daudet's parents-in-law, the Allards, quite inappropriate here save for the fact that the book is dedicated to them. Not only confusions in order but even inconsistencies in facts are repeatedly found. On page 190 Mlle Martinet states wrongly that Daudet met Mistral for the first time on his visit to Fontvieille in 1860, while on page 233 she affirms, this time accurately, that Daudet had known the author of *Mireille* in Paris in 1859. But on page 263 she suggests he met Mistral in Provence, though she gives a note with the correct date. Repetitions, exact or inexact, unnecessary citations, the variety of styles of many "contributors," make for a most uneven work.

Despite the length of the biography, there are several portions of Daudet's life which are not clearly presented to the reader. Mlle Martinet is sketchy on the events of his career from 1858 to 1865, to mention only one instance, and these are the important formative years. She has neglected to examine the various periodicals for which he was a hack writer at the time, though they are in the Bibliothèque Nationale and throw much light on his later writings.

If in the biographical portion of her work her organization is faulty, Mlle Martinet has not given in its stead a literary and critical study of her author, but is satisfied to make summaries, and where criticism is introduced, it is frequently from the pen of an unacknowledged Brunetière or Montégut. Occasionally (cf. Chapter XLIV: "Souvenirs littéraires") a few brief statements culled from the complete edition suffice her.

Nor is her bibliography impressive, or anywhere near complete. Evidently assembled in haste, it is not even in alphabetical order. Furthermore, she has copied the abbreviations given by such bibliographers as Thieme for her journals, without giving us the key to these abbreviations, so that unless one consults the original, her items often cannot be understood.

It is evident that Mlle Martinet has worked long at compiling the material for a full length biography of Alphonse Daudet, but possibly in her hurry to present her thesis this year, she has not effectively organized her notes. There is no doubt but that scattered within the covers of her work, there is an abundance of information, which, used with skill, would have produced the most valuable work on Daudet to date.

Her secondary thesis is a somewhat mechanical study of the genesis of *Numa Roumestan*, based upon the notes published with the 1930 edition of that novel. Again there is a plethora of quotations.

All told, it is unfortunate to wait so long for Daudet's biography only to be so disappointed in this, his centennial year.

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Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine: Histoire des mots. Par A. ERNOUT et T. A. MEILLET. Nouvelle édition, revue, corrigée et augmentée d'un index. Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1939. Pp. xxi+1184.

Since the publication of the first edition of this dictionary, Professor Meillet has passed away. On M. Ernout has fallen the whole burden of the revision. The two main features that gave such originality to the work, the sense of the social value and living aspect of language¹ and the interest in the Romance results of the evolution of words, have been, wherever possible, still more

1. E. g., *matula*, "vase," "pot," also "insult" (cf. Fr. *cruche*); *scortum*, "skin," also "prostitute" (cf. Fr. *peau*).

thoroughly emphasized. This dictionary is therefore well-nigh indispensable to the Romance scholar, for whom the history of words from earliest times to the modern period and their connection with cognates in other Indo-European languages is obviously of the greatest utility. Thus, with regard to the question of the Romance extension of the *-ō*, *-ōne* declension (whether it is a normal Romance development or one that is due to the influence of the Germanic invaders), the popular character of the ending and its constant expansion in the history of Latin will at once convince the scholar that the hypothesis of a Germanic influence is quite superfluous.²

Much of the semantic evolution toward Romance meanings took place completely or in part in the Latin period,³ and the authors' method of illustrating each new shade by a pertinent quotation is the quickest and safest way of following the trend that brings the reader down to the Romance period. We see also the aid that Romance Philology has given to Latin research in this domain of semantic evolution (the knowledge of the result often helps in estimating the nature and value of a change), as well as in the matter of hidden quantity, which the Romance development alone often detects.⁴ The difference between the second edition of the dictionary and the first lies partly in the greater importance given to this Vulgar Latin and Romance aspect.⁵

A few remarks from the Romance point of view:

Page 1: I miss the Latin and Vulgar Latin points of departure for the semantic evolution of *ab*, which acquires the meaning of *cum* (*et ab Ludher nul plaid prindrai*: Strasbourg Oath). Cf. many examples in my *Chronology of Vulgar Latin*.

Page 12: some of the later extensions of the meanings of *ad* might have been mentioned.

Page 45: to *Interamna* might have been added *Entramnes* and *Entrains* in France.

Page 63: until the seventh century, the use of *apud* in Gaul does not materially differ from what appears in the rest of Romania; an example such as Querolus, page 22 (*iste qui apud me est locutus*) is matched by the author of the *De Bello Hispanico*, xvii (*Tullius . . . apud Caesarem verbe fecit*). Cf. *Chronology*, page 59.

Page 72: *aringus*, a transcription of "herring" "à basse époque," is given by Meyer-Lübke (*REW* 4046) as from imperial times; in the third century, say Bloch and Von Wartburg.

2. E. g., *longurius* > *longuriō-ōnis*, "half pint" (cf. Fr. *perche*, "tall and thin individual"); *sanna*, "grimace" > *sannio-ōnis*, "buffoon." This ending is often found in words of typically popular, sometimes obscene character: *sopio-ōnis*, *mulō-ōnis*, *culio-ōnis*.

3. E. g., *causa* > *chose*; *femina*, with the meaning of "wife," already appearing in Ovid, *Met.*, 8.204; *coratum* < *cor*, paving the way for *coraticum* > *courage*.

4. E. g., *crūsta*.

5. E. g., *condoma*, *leccator*.

Page 89: why is Enlarts' etymology of *ogive* from *augivus* from *augeo* not mentioned?

Page 97: *essieu* goes back to *axilis*.

Page 119: there is no convincing reason why the Romance forms derived from *brūtus* should be considered learned.

Page 122: *burgus* obviously comes from *πύργος*; Germanic influence is superfluous.

Page 173: for *Zins* from *census*, the Germanic borrowing must also be a late one, since *c* > *ts* (cf. *cellarium* > *Keller*).

Page 201: the seventh-century form *coco*⁶ might have been mentioned here.

Page 211: the existence of *conquiliū* (> *coquillage*), side by side with *conchylium*, makes unnecessary Bloch and Von Wartburg's supposition of a Romance development under the influence of *coque*.

Page 218: *coquere* also has the meaning of "to burn," as at the stake; cf. Pliny, *H. N.*, XXIII, 31: "*legitime coctae*"; Lactantius, *De Morte Persecutorum*, CXII. This meaning still appears in the *Cantilène de Ste. Eulalie* ("*elle colpes n̄ auret, poro nos coist*"—"did not burn").

Page 238: in connection with *cūcūlus*, *cucullus* > Fr. *coucou*, the history of the word disposes of Bloch and Von Wartburg's theory as to onomatopoeia in French. French *coucou* comes from the Latin, and the onomatopoeia goes far back beyond the Latin period.

Page 345: side by side with *fēnum*, Italian *fieno* presupposes a form *faenum* as a perurbanism.

Page 390: *frigidus non frigidus* of the *Appendix Probi* may indicate the palatalization of *g* before *i*.

Page 457: Meillet believes that *homo* became *on* under Germanic influence; yet its use in this sense in the Vulgate is frequent.

Page 500: I have shown⁷ that the use of *jube* in "*jube considerare, pater, codicem istum*" (*Vitae Patrum*, 330) must be interpreted as a polite expression based on the assumption that the person who is asked to perform a certain action will not do it himself, but have it done for him by someone else. When *jubere* was replaced by *facere*, the latter took on and extended this meaning down to the thirteenth century.⁸

Page 513: "*Labor est pan-roman*," except French.

Page 518: Romance development requires a form *lūridus* side by side with *lūridus*.

Page 587: *mansionaticus* needs no asterisk (Migne, 109, *Ludov. Pius Dipl. Eccl.*, XXV, 1013.815). Neither does *mansionile* (*De Villis*, 19).

6. K. Zeumer, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Legum Sectio* v, p. 225.

7. *Origine et histoire de la préposition à*, Poitiers, 1912, p. 111 ff.

8. Plautus, *Aulularia*, 401: "*Nisi reddi mihi vasa jubes*" ("unless you return these utensils to me," literally: "cause to be returned"). *Rich. de Norm.*, 3711: "*Richard, fait li messages, Fai ma parole oir*" ("hear my words"); cf. Leo Spitzer, *ZfSL*, XLII, 279.

Page 597: It. *netto* comes directly from *nitidus*, without the intermediation of French claimed by the authors (cf. Meyer-Lübke, *REW*, 5927).

Page 673: *nō*, *nāre*, because monosyllabic, was replaced by *natō*, *natāre*. But why was *rōbigō* replaced by *rōbicūla* (*rouille*)?

Page 767: *pilare*, palatalized, becomes *piliare* > *piller*, "to pillage." Other examples are *fallere* > *faillir*, *salire* > *sailir*, *dolus* > *deuil*.

Page 803: *exprendere* > *éprendre* might have been added. Cf. *sprendunt*, *Reichen. Gloss.*, Förster, 1084.

Page 806: mention might have been made of Menéndez-Pidal's etymology of *bravo* from *pravus*.

Page 821: *puella* gives *polle* in *Eulalie*.

Page 939: *Sevērus* is preserved in toponymy; *Dancevoir* (*Dominus Sevērus*), Haute-Marne, France.

Page 959: *sortus* is a doublet of *surrectus*; It. *sorto*, *risorto* might have been mentioned.

Page 971: French *étang* evidently comes from *stagnum*, despite the irregular development and Bloch and Von Wartburg's attempt to connect it with *étancher*.

Ibid.: Fr. *étoile* goes back to **stēla*.

Page 999: *suctiare* should be starred.

Page 1033: Meillet and Ernout seem to accept *tritäre* as the etymon of Fr. *trier*.

Page 1016: *talutium* should be *talūtium*.

Page 1048: in spite of Meyer-Lübke's doubts, Fr. *toron* is manifestly a development in *-ō*, *-ōnis* from *torus*.

Page 1065: why star *turbō-ōnis*, since it is given by Charisius in *Tib.* 1.5.3?

Page 1066: the so-called doublet *turgiō*, *turiō* is perhaps just a double spelling of the same word; *g* before *e* and *i* was palatalized as early as the sixth century.

Page 1082: I doubt the existence of two different origins for *vēlum* and *vēla* (Fr. *un voile*, *une voile*) merely on account of different semantic development. Cf. *vascellum* > Fr. *vaisseau*; *vascella* > Fr. *vaisselle*.

Page 1086: *vendo* should be *vēndo*.

Page 1126: the authors are right, in my opinion, in admitting the identity of *uniō* (*oignon*) and *ūniō* (*union*) from *ūnus*, despite the objections of Meyer-Lübke, Bloch and Von Wartburg: cf. *villa* and *vēlla*, *vīcus* and *vēcus* in Varro, as well as *fūsiōne* > *foison*.

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VOLUME XXXI: AUTHOR INDEX

- Baldensperger, Fernand, *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. Part IV: The Period of Racine, 1673-1700* by H. C. Lancaster, 404-408
- Bédé, Jean-Albert, *Flaubert and Madame Bovary: A Double Portrait* by F. Steegmuller, 86-90
- Bond, Donald F., John F. McDermott and Joseph E. Tucker, *Anglo-French and Franco-American Studies*, 1939, 114-146
- Brée, Germaine, *Source et emploi d'un épisode dans A la recherche du temps perdu*, 372-379
- Brenner, Clarence D., *Little-Known Sources for the Study of the Eighteenth-Century French Theatre*, 254-258
- Cons, Louis, *Histoire littéraire de la France. Tome XXXVII* by Les Membres de l'Institut, 394-398
- Delattre, André, *Les Premières Relations de Sainte-Beuve avec Chateaubriand et l'Abbaye-aux-Bois*, 29-34
- Dieckmann, Herbert, *Antoine de Rivarol (1753-1801) und der Ausgang der französischen Aufklärung* by K.-E. Gass, 183-187
- Diller, George E., *Notes sur l'esthétique de la femme au XVI^e siècle* by M. Françon, 75-76
- Edelman, Nathan, *L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* by A. Cioranescu, 172-175
- Favreau, A. R., *Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), sa vie et son œuvre* by Y. Martinet; *Numa Roumestan par A. Daudet: La Pièce et le roman* by Y. Martinet, 416-418
- Fermaud, Jacques Albert, *Défense du confident*, 334-339
- Fernández, Xavier A., *From Latin to Portuguese* by E. B. Williams, 95-97
- Fichter, W. L., *Lope de Vega's El palacio confuso, Together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature* by C. H. Stevens; *Agustín de Rojas' El natural desdichado* by J. W. Crowell, 398-403
- Frank, Grace, *Proverbes en rimes (B)*, 209-238
- *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian Romance* by H. Newstead, 293-295
- Fredrick, Edna C., *Marivaux and Musset: Les Serments indiscrets and On ne badine pas avec l'amour*, 259-264
- Frohock, W. M., *Stendhal* by F. C. Green, 187-190
- Gagey, Edmond McAdoo, *Revivals and Importations of French comedies in England, 1749-1800* by W. A. Kinne, 408-410
- Guiton, Jean, *Le Mythe des paroles gelées (Rabelais, Quart Livre, LV-LVI)*, 3-15
- Harvey, H. G., *The Judge and the Lawyer in the Pathelin*, 313-333
- Havens, George R., *Twelve New Letters of Voltaire to Gabriel Cramer*, 341-354
- *Le Goût de Voltaire* by R. Naves; *Le Temple du goût* by Voltaire, ed. E. Carcassonne, 77-78
- *Figures et aventures du XVIII^e siècle: Voyages et découvertes de l'abbé Prévost* by C.-E. Engel, 176-178
- Hespelt, E. Herman, *Rousseau in the Spanish World before 1833* by J. R. Spell, 82-84
- Holmes, Urban T., Jr., *Some Romance Words of Arabic or Germanic Origin* by L. P. Brown, 198-200
- Lerch, Eugen, "Deliver Us from Evil" in Romance Languages, 52-73
- Livingston, Charles H., *Explication d'une allusion littéraire dans un texte du XIII^e siècle*, 112-113
- Lynes, Carlos, Jr., *Chateaubriand, Revitalizer of the French Classics*, 355-363
- Malakis, Emile, *Chateaubriand, Essais de critique et d'histoire littéraire* by

- M. Duchemin, 84-86
- McDermott, John F., *see* Bond, Donald F.
- Muller, Henri F., *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots* by A. Ernout and T. A. Meillet, 418-421
- Naughton, A. E. A., *Jeunesse de Diderot (de 1713 à 1753)* by F. Venturi, 299-301
- Navarro, Tomás, *Bibliographie franco-portugaise: Essai d'une bibliographie chronologique de livres français sur le Portugal* by B. X. C. Coutinho, 304
- Niess, Robert J., *The Letters of Emile Zola to Van Santen Kolff*, 35-43
- O'Brien, Justin, *La Nouvelle Revue Française dans l'histoire des lettres* by L. Morino, 190-194
- *Paris-Théâtre contemporain. Deuxième Partie* by L. Delpit, 194
- Olschki, Leonard, Dante and Peter de Vine, 105-111
- Palfrey, Thomas R., *Sur une biographie de Byron ayant appartenu à Stendhal*, 280-284
- Patterson, Warner F., *Claude Fauchet, sa vie, son œuvre* by J. G. Espiner-Scott; *Documents concernant la vie et les œuvres de Claude Fauchet* by J. G. Espiner-Scott; *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poésie française* by C. Fauchet, 74-75
- Peckham, Lawton P. G., *Syntaxe du français moderne. Tome II* by G. and R. Le Bidois, 200-203
- Pei, Mario A., *French -ier from Latin -arius*, 380-393
- *Lingua contemporanea* by B. Migliorini, 92-95
- *Foundations of Language* by L. H. Gray, 194-198
- *La Canzone d'Orlando* by E. Bossi; *Roland-Orlando dans l'épopée française et italienne* by F. Th. A. Voigt; *Le Origini delle canzoni di gesta: teorie e discussioni* by I. Siciliano, 285-292
- *The Spanish Language, Together with Portuguese, Catalan and Basque* by W. J. Entwistle, 304-309
- Peyre, Henri, *Jean Racine* by A. F. B. Clark, 296-298
- *Quatre Etudes* by P. Hazard, 410-412
- Philips, Edith, *The Spirit of Voltaire* by N. L. Torrey, 178-181
- Rhodes, S. A., *The Influence of Walt Whitman on André Gide*, 156-171
- Rodrigue, Elisabeth M., *Le Verger des images de Saint François de Sales*, 242-253
- Rosenberg, Leon W., *The Beginning of Wisdom* by Abraham ibn Ezra, edited by R. Levy and F. Cantera, 292-293
- Schaffer, Aaron, *A Parnassian La Rochefoucauld: Madame de La Rocheguyon*, 364-371
- Schapiro, Meyer, *Images et romans: Parenté des estampes et du roman réaliste de 1815 à 1865* by M. Mespoulet, 414-416
- Schinz, Albert, *A List of French Prose Fiction from 1700 to 1750* by S. P. Jones, 175-176
- Smith, Horatio, *Hippolyte Taine: Essai sur l'unité de sa pensée* by K. de Schaepdryver, 301-303
- *Sainte-Beuve, Studio su Virgilio* by T. Fiore, 412-414
- Spitzer, Leo, *Ça fait distingué; elle fait "espagnole"*, 44-51
- Tarr, F. Courtney, *Recent Trends in Cervantes Studies: An Attempt at Survey and Prognosis*, 16-28
- Thorndike, Lynn, *An Anonymous Work on Poisons Addressed to Charles of Orléans*, 239-241
- Torrey, Norman L., *see* Wade, Ira
- *Voltaire's Poème sur la loi naturelle* by F. J. Crowley, 181-183
- Tucker, Joseph E., *see* Bond, Donald F.
- Wade, Ira, *Voltaire et l'Encyclopédie* by R. Naves, 78-81
- and Norman L. Torrey, *Voltaire and Polier de Bottens*, 147-155
- Walter, Felix, *The Spirit of French Canada: A Study of the Literature* by I. F. Fraser, 90-92
- Wenger, Jared, *Violence as a Technique in the Dramas and Dramatizations of Dumas père*, 265-279

VOLUME XXXI: SUBJECT INDEX

Ariosto, Ludovico, 172-175
 Arthurian Romance, 293-295

Beyle, Henri, 187-190, 280-284
 Bibliographies, 114-146
 Bossi, Elda, *La Canzone d'Orlando* (review), 285-292
 Bran the Blessed, 293-295
 Brown, Leslie Parker, *Some Romance Words of Arabic or Germanic Origin* (review), 198-200
 Byron, Lord, 280-284

CANADIAN LITERATURE

Walter (Felix), *The Spirit of French Canada: A Study of the Literature* by I. F. Fraser, 90-92

Cervantes, 16-28
 Chateaubriand, François René de, 29-34, 84-86, 355-363
 Cioranescu, Alexandre, *L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (review), 172-175
 Clark, A. F. B., *Jean Racine* (review), 296-298

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Bond (Donald F.), *Anglo-French and Franco-American Studies*, 1939, 114-146
 Edelman (Nathan), *L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* by A. Cioranescu, 172-175
 Gagey (Edmond McAdoo), *Revivals and Importations of French Comedies in England, 1749-1800* by W. A. Kinne, 408-410
 Guiton (Jean), *Le Mythe des paroles gelées* (Rabelais, *Quart Livre*, LV-LVI), 3-15
 Havens (George R.), *Figures et aventures du XVIII^e siècle: Voyages et découvertes de l'abbé Prévost* by C.-E. Engel, 176-178
 Hespelt (E. Herman), *Rousseau in the Spanish World before 1833: A Study in Franco-Spanish Literary*

Relations by J. R. Spell, 82-84
 Navarro (Tomás), *Bibliographie franco-portugaise: Essai d'une bibliographie chronologique de livres français sur le Portugal* by B. X. C. Coutinho, 304
 Palfrey (Thomas R.), *Sur une biographie de Byron ayant appartenu à Stendhal*, 280-284
 Pei (Mario A.), *Roland-Orlando dans l'épopée française et italienne* by F. Th. A. Voigt, 285-292
 Rhodes (S. A.), *The Influence of Walt Whitman on André Gide*, 156-171

Coutinho, Bernardo Xavier C., *Bibliographie franco-portugaise: Essai d'une bibliographie chronologique de livres français sur le Portugal* (review), 304
 Cramer, Gabriel, 341-354
 Crowell, James White, *Agustín de Rojas' El natural desdichado* (review), 398-403
 Crowley, Francis J., *Voltaire's Poème sur la loi naturelle* (review), 181-183

Dante, 105-111
 Daudet, Alphonse, 416-418
 Delpit, Louise, *Paris-Théâtre contemporain. Deuxième Partie* (review), 194
 Diderot, Denis, 299-301
 Duchemin, Marcel, *Chateaubriand, Essai de critique et d'histoire littéraire* (review), 84-86
 Dumas, Alexandre, *père*, 265-279

Engel, Claire-Eliane, *Figures et aventures du XVIII^e siècle: Voyages et découvertes de l'abbé Prévost* (review), 176-178
 Entwistle, William J., *The Spanish Language, Together with Portuguese, Catalan and Basque* (review), 304-309
 Ernout, A., and T. A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots* (review), 418-421
 Espiner-Scott, Janet Girvan, *Claude Fauchet, sa vie, son œuvre* (review), 74-75

— Janet Girvan, *Documents con-*

- cernant la vie et les œuvres de Claude Fauchet* (review), 74-75
- Ezra, Abraham ibn, *The Beginning of Wisdom*. Edited by Raphael Levy and Francisco Cantera (review), 292-293
- Fauchet, Claude, *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poésie française. Rymes et romans* (review), 74-75
- Fiore, Tommaso, *Sainte-Beuve, Studio su Virgilio* (review), 412-414
- Flaubert, Gustave, 86-90
- Françon, Marcel, *Notes sur l'esthétique de la femme au XVI^e siècle* (review), 75-76
- Fraser, Ian Forbes, *The Spirit of French Canada: A Study of the Literature* (review), 90-92
- FRENCH LITERATURE—
MIEVEAL
- Cons (Louis), *Histoire littéraire de la France. Tome XXXVII* by Les Membres de l'Institut, 394-398
- Frank (Grace), *Proverbes en rimes (B)*, 209-238
- Harvey (H. G.), *The Judge and the Lawyer in the Pathelin*, 313-333
- Livingston (Charles H.), *Explication d'une allusion littéraire dans un texte du XIII^e siècle*, 112-113
- Pei (Mario A.), *La Canzone d'Orlando* by E. Bossi; *Roland-Orlando dans l'épopée française et italienne* by F. Th. A. Voigt; *Le Origini delle canzoni di gesta: teorie e discussioni* by I. Siciliano, 285-292
- FRENCH LITERATURE—
XVI. CENTURY
- Diller (George E.), *Notes sur l'esthétique de la femme au XVI^e siècle* by M. Françon, 75-76
- Guiton (Jean), *Le Mythe des paroles gelées* (Rabelais, *Quart Livre*, LV-LVI), 3-15
- Patterson (Claude F.), *Claude Fauchet, sa vie, son œuvre* by J. G. Espiner-Scott; *Documents concernant la vie et les œuvres de Claude Fauchet* by J. G. Espiner-Scott; *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poésie française* by C. Fauchet, 74-75
- Rodrigue (Elisabeth M.), *Le Verger des images de Saint François de Sales*, 242-253
- FRENCH LITERATURE—
XVII. CENTURY
- Baldensperger (Fernand), *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. Part IV: The Period of Racine, 1673-1700* by H. C. Lancaster, 404-408
- Fermaud (Jacques Albert), *Défense du confident*, 334-339
- Lynes (Carlos, Jr.), *Chateaubriand, Revitalizer of the French Classics*, 355-363
- Peyre (Henri), *Jean Racine* by A. F. B. Clark, 296-298
- FRENCH LITERATURE—
XVIII. CENTURY
- Brenner (Clarence D.), *Little-Known Sources for the Study of the Eighteenth-Century French Theatre*, 254-258
- Dieckmann (Herbert), *Antoine de Rivarol (1753-1801) und der Ausgang der französischen Aufklärung* by K.-E. Gass, 183-187
- Fredrick (Edna C.), *Marivaux and Musset: Les Serments indiscrets and On ne badine pas avec l'amour*, 259-264
- Gagey (Edmond McAdoo), *Revivals and Importations of French Comedies in England, 1749-1800* by W. A. Kinne, 408-410
- Havens (George R.), *Twelve New Letters of Voltaire to Gabriel Cramer*, 341-354
- *Le Goût de Voltaire* by R. Naves; *Le Temple du goût* by Voltaire, ed. E. Carcassonne, 77-78
- *Figures et aventures du XVIII^e siècle: Voyages et découvertes de l'abbé Prévost* by C.-E. Engel, 176-178
- Hespelt (E. Herman), *Rousseau in the Spanish World before 1833: A Study in Franco-Spanish Literary*

- Relations* by J. R. Spell, 82-84
 Naughton (A. E. A.), *Jeunesse de Diderot (de 1713 à 1753)* by F. Venturi, 299-301
 Peyre (Henri), *Quatre Etudes* by P. Hazard, 410-412
 Phillips (Edith), *The Spirit of Voltaire* by N. L. Torrey, 178-181
 Schinz (Albert), *A List of French Prose Fiction from 1700-1750* by S. P. Jones, 175-176
 Torrey (Norman L.), *Voltaire's Poème sur la loi naturelle* by F. J. Crowley, 181-183
 Wade (Ira), *Voltaire et l'Encyclopédie* by R. Naves, 78-81
 — and Norman L. Torrey, *Voltaire and Polier de Bottons*, 147-155

FRENCH LITERATURE—

XIX. CENTURY

- Bédé (Jean-Albert), *Flaubert and Madame Bovary: A Double Portrait* by F. Steegmuller, 86-90
 Delattre (André), *Les Premières Relations de Sainte-Beuve avec Chateaubriand et l'Abbaye-aux-Bois*, 29-34
 Favreau (A. R.), *Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), sa vie et son œuvre* by Y. Martinet; *Numa Roumestan par A. Daudet: La Pièce et le roman* by Y. Martinet, 416-418
 Fredrick (Edna C.), *Marivaux and Musset: Les Serments indiscrets and On ne badine pas avec l'amour*, 259-264
 Frohock (W. M.), *Stendhal* by F. C. Green, 187-190
 Lynes (Carlos, Jr.), *Chateaubriand, Revitalizer of the French Classics*, 355-363
 Malakis (Emile), *Chateaubriand, Essais de critique et d'histoire littéraire* by M. Duchemin, 84-86
 Niess (Robert J.), *The Letters of Emile Zola to Van Santen Kolff*, 35-43
 Palfrey (Thomas R.), *Sur une biographie de Byron ayant appartenu à Stendhal*, 280-284
 Peyre (Henri), *Quatre Etudes* by P.

- Hazard, 410-412
 Schaffer (Aaron), *A Parnassian La Rochefoucauld: Madame de La Roche-Guyon*, 364-371
 Schapiro (Meyer), *Images et romans: Parenté des estampes et du roman réaliste de 1815 à 1865* by M. Mespoulet, 414-416
 Smith (Horatio), *Hippolyte Taine: Essai sur l'unité de sa pensée* by K. de Schaepdryver, 301-303
 — *Sainte-Beuve, Studio su Virgilio* by T. Fiore, 412-414
 Wenger (Jared), *Violence as a Technique in the Dramas and Dramatizations of Dumas père*, 265-279

FRENCH LITERATURE—

XX. CENTURY

- Brée (Germaine), *Source et emploi d'un épisode dans A la recherche du temps perdu*, 372-379
 O'Brien (Justin), *La Nouvelle Revue Française dans l'histoire des lettres* by L. Morino, 190-194
 — *Paris-Théâtre contemporain. Deuxième Partie* by L. Delpit, 194
 Rhodes (S. A.), *The Influence of Walt Whitman on André Gide*, 156-171
 Gass, Karl-Eugen, *Antoine de Rivarol (1753-1801) und der Ausgang der französischen Aufklärung* (review), 183-187
 Gide, André, 156-171, 190-194
 Gray, Louis H., *Foundations of Language* (review), 194-198
 Green, F. C., *Stendhal* (review), 187-190
 Hazard, Paul, *Quatre Etudes* (review), 410-412
 Institut, *Les Membres de l' Histoire littéraire de la France. Tome XXXVII* (review), 394-398
 ITALIAN LITERATURE
 Edelman (Nathan), *L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* by A. Cioranescu, 172-175
 Olschki (Leonard), *Dante and Peter de Vine*, 105-111

Jones, S. Paul, *A List of French Prose Fiction from 1700 to 1750* (review), 175-176

Kinne, Willard Austin, *Revivals and Importations of French comedies in England 1749-1800* (review), 408-410

Lancaster, Henry Carrington, *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. Part IV: The Period of Racine, 1673-1700* (review), 404-408

La Roche-Guyon, Mme de, 364-371

Le Bidois, Georges and Robert, *Syntaxe du français moderne. Tome II* (review), 200-203

LINGUISTICS

Fernández (Xavier A.), *From Latin to Portuguese* by E. B. Williams, 95-97

Holmes (Urban T., Jr.), *Some Romance Words of Arabic or Germanic Origin* by L. P. Brown, 198-200

Lerch (Eugen), "Deliver Us from Evil" in Romance Languages, 52-73

Muller (Henri F.), *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots* by A. Ernout and T. A. Meillet, 418-421

Peckham (Lawton P. G.), *Syntaxe du français moderne. Tome II* by G. and R. Le Bidois, 200-203

Pei (Mario A.), *French -ier from Latin -arius*, 380-393

— *Lingua contemporanea* by B. Migliorini, 92-95

— *Foundations of Language* by L. H. Gray, 194-198

— *The Spanish Language, Together with Portuguese, Catalan and Basque* by W. J. Entwistle, 304-309

Spitzer (Leo), *Ça fait distingué: elle fait "espagnole"*, 44-51

Lope de Vega, 398-403

Marivaux, Pierre de, 259-264

Martinet, Yvonne, *Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), sa vie et son œuvre* (review), 416-418

— *Numa Roumestan par A. Daudet: La Pièce et le roman* (review), 416-418

MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Cons (Louis), *Histoire littéraire de la France. Tome XXXVII* by Les Membres de l'Institut, 394-398

Frank (Grace), *Proverbes en rimes* (B), 209-238

— *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian Romance* by H. Newstead, 293-295

Harvey (H. G.), *The Judge and the Lawyer in the Pathelin*, 313-333

Livingston (Charles H.), *Explication d'une allusion littéraire dans un texte du XIII^e siècle*, 112-113

Olschki (Leonard), *Dante and Peter de Vine*, 105-111

Pei (Mario A.), *La Canzone d'Orlando* by E. Bossi; *Roland-Orlando dans l'épopée française et italienne* by F. Th. A. Voigt; *Le Origini delle canzoni di gesta: teorie e discussioni* by I. Siciliano, 285-292

Rosenberg (Leon W.), *The Beginning of Wisdom* by Abraham ibn Ezra, edited by R. Levy and F. Cantera, 292-293

Thorndike (Lynn), *An Anonymous Work on Poisons Addressed to Charles of Orleans*, 239-241

Meillet, T. A., *see* Ernout, A.

Mespoulet, M., *Images et romans: Parenté des estampes et du roman réaliste de 1815 à 1865* (review), 414-416

Migliorini, Bruno, *Lingua contemporanea* (review), 92-95

Morino, L., *La Nouvelle Revue Française dans l'histoire des lettres* (review), 190-194

Musset, Alfred de, 259-264

Naves, Raymond, *Le Goût de Voltaire* (review), 77-78

— *Voltaire et l'Encyclopédie* (review), 78-81

Newstead, Helaine, *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian Romance* (review), 293-295

Nouvelle Revue Française, La, 190-194

- Pathelin, *La Farce de Maistre Pierre*,
313-333
Peter de Vineia, 105-111
Polier de Bottens, 147-155

PORTUGUESE LITERATURE

- Navarro (Tomás), *Bibliographie franco-portugaise: Essai d'une bibliographie chronologique de livres français sur le Portugal* by B. X. C. Coutinho, 304
Prévost, l'abbé, 176-178
Proust, Marcel, 372-379
Rabelais, François, 3-15
Racine, Jean, 296-298, 404-408
Rivarol, Antoine de, 183-187
Rojas, Agustín de, 398-403
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 82-84

- Sainte-Beuve, Charles-Augustin, 29-34, 412-414
Sales, St. François de, 242-253
Schaeppdryver, K. de, *Hippolyte Taine: Essai sur l'unité de sa pensée* (review), 301-303
Siciliano, Italo, *Le Origini delle canzoni di gesta: teorie e discussioni* (review), 285-292

SPANISH LITERATURE

- Fichter (W. L.), *Lope de Vega's El palacio confuso, together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature* by C. H. Stevens; *Agustín de Rojas' El natural desdichado* by J. W. Crowell, 398-403

- Tarr (F. Courtney), *Recent Trends in Cervantes Studies: An Attempt at Survey and Prognosis*, 16-28

- Spell, Jefferson Rea, *Rousseau in the Spanish World before 1833: A Study in Franco-Spanish Literary Relations* (review), 82-84

- Steegmuller, Francis, *Flaubert and Madame Bovary: A Double Portrait* (review), 86-90

- Stendhal, 187-190, 280-284

- Stevens, Charles Henry, *Lope de Vega's El palacio confuso, Together with a Study of the Menaechmi Theme in Spanish Literature* (review), 398-403

- Taine, Hippolyte, 301-303

- Torrey, Norman L., *The Spirit of Voltaire* (review), 178-181

- Vega, Carpio, Lope Félix de, 398-403

- Venturi, Franco, *Jeunesse de Diderot (de 1713 à 1753)* (review), 299-301

- Voigt, F. Th. A., *Roland-Orlando dans l'épopée française et italienne* (review), 285-292

- Voltaire, *Le Temple du goût*. Edition critique par E. Carcassonne (review), 77-78

- Voltaire, 77-78, 78-81, 147-155, 178-181, 181-183, 341-354

- Whitman, Walt, 156-171

- Williams, Edwin B., *From Latin to Portuguese* (review), 95-97

- Zola, Emile, 35-43

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